

Cranfield University

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**Top Team Leadership in  
Local Government**

School of Management

Doctor of Business Administration



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## **OVERVIEW (Linking Document)**

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### **Understanding Leadership in Local Government**

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# **1 A Study of Top Team Leadership in Local Government**

## **1.1 Overview**

This chapter seeks to provide an overview of the entire Doctor in Business Administration. The structure of the DBA involves three individual study elements, named Projects 1, 2 and 3. This present Chapter acts as a ‘linking document’ and provides an overview of the entire DBA.

For the purposes of this thesis, I have assumed that the knowledge gained, together with the underpinning literature, is cumulative, and will therefore not be repeated in every single project.

### **1.1.1 Background – My life as an elected member**

In 1995, I was elected as a County Borough Councillor in the Pontyclun ward of Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council (RCT), the second largest unitary authority in South Wales.

Indeed, it was that year that RCT came into existence, at the time that all authorities in Wales moved from the two-tier system of governance (County and Borough Councils) to become single unitary authorities.

In 1995, RCT served a resident base of some 288,000 residents, with a revenue budget of some £230 million, and employing approximately 14,000 staff.

In 2007, whilst the resident base remains broadly similar, the revenue budget is now approaching £400 million, although the staff figure has also remained static.

The intervening period has seen the authority change political control on two occasions. In 1995, the authority was Labour controlled, holding 55 out of 75 seats. In 1999, the administration moved to Plaid Cymru control, with a majority of 42 out of the 75 seats. In 2004, Labour was returned with a solid majority, taking 53 out of the 75 seats.

The genesis for this research came in 1999 when I was elected to the position of Deputy Leader of the Council as part of that Plaid Cymru administration. The authority at that time was widely recognised as one of the poorest performing authorities in Wales, if not the UK.

The Direct Services Organisations (DSO's) were trading at a £6m loss with a turnover of only £13m. Substantial deficits were also experienced in Social Services, Highways and Education. There was no "golden thread", the strategic elements that one would normally see in a local authority – the community plan; corporate plan; performance plan; improvement plan; business plans etc.

Moreover, there were no cost centre accounts, and the "books" had not been formally closed by the audit commission for the last two years – we later found that this was hiding the fact that the authority was in a position of negative reserves (ultra vires for a public body), having spent over £26m of reserves over a three year period.



The last act of the Labour administration in 1999 was to replace the Chief Executive. The new Plaid Cymru administration was in leadership for the first time ever at County level.

1999 also saw new local government legislation allowing different models of governance, and RCT adopted the Cabinet model, moving away from the traditional committee system.

This created a new dynamic of governance, both within the Cabinet itself (members) and the Senior Management Team (officers).

The legislation also demanded a shared legitimacy of leadership between members and officers. Previously, the relationship could be described as members say and officers do. There is now greater role clarity,

Decisions at a policy level are the purview of members, supported by officer's professional advice. Strategic decisions are a shared responsibility between members and officers. Operational matters are the realm of officers only.

Thus, there was a renaissance of governance in RCT, both in terms of structure, personality and role.

The challenges were clear - setting a new direction for the council, dealing with the challenges, operationalised through the new governance arrangements.

The guidance was clear; leadership is the key ingredient in the recipe. The issue, however, was understanding what constituted successful leadership in the new context. The difficulty was that there had been little research into cabinet governance in the local government context.

### **1.1.2 Leadership Theory**

There has been a huge volume of academic literature produced in the field of leadership.

The initial notions surrounded the Trait Theories and the Born to Lead School of Ghiselli (1963), Bass (1985), Senge (1992) and Bennis (1998), outlining a notion of particular characteristics or skills possessed by the individual, often from birth, that would enable them to be successful leaders.

The Behavioural School flowed from authors such as Likert (1961) and Mouton (1964), and concentrated on style of leadership and interaction with followers. Blake and Mouton (1964) went further, describing a Managerial Grid, which postulated a “best” style of leadership behaviour related to typology of follower.

The Contingency Approach extended this notion, postulating that factors other than leader/follower relationships were also of importance, such as structure; situational and environmental factors; task structure; and organisational culture. These would help inform the appropriate leadership behaviour or style.

Rowe (2001) wrote about Strategic Leadership, describing this as “*the ability to influence .....decisions that involve the long term viability of the organisation*”.

Selznick (1957) linked this to the concept of individuals holding concern for the evolution of the organisation as a whole. Boal and Hooijberg (2001) described this as a “*future-oriented notion of Visionary Leadership*”.

Cyert and March (1963) suggested that the contingency approach, including notions of Visionary and Strategic Leadership, needed to be focused not only on the head of the organisation, but also members of the top team

The notion of a Top Team became important to this research given the onset of cabinet models of governance within a context of shared legitimacy of leadership between members and officers.

Specifically, the work of Kakabadse and Kakabadse (1999) on Top Teams has provided a model with a focus on role, strategic vision, cohesion, context and capability. Hambrick and Mason (1984) provided a model with a similar emphasis on the Top Team approach, but with its focus on demographic influences, background and role. Earlier work by Cyert and March (1963) described the notion of a dominant coalition at the top of an organisation, and comes to dominate within the areas of its activity.

For this research, it is these models that have helped form a framework for exploring top team leadership within the context of local government. However, it should be noted that at this point in time, none of the above studies have explored top team leadership in the context of the local authority.

But what of research into political leadership? There has been little academic research undertaken on political activity within the context of local authorities. The body of literature described here exists more within the Public Management and Public Administration schools, though connects well with the emerging school of Public Leadership models.

Early academic studies made reference to items such as the agenda setting process; exertion of power (Lukes, 1974); negotiation and conflict resolution (Dahl, 1958); the policy process (Kingdon, 1984; Lindblom, 1959; Dror, 1964); stakeholder management etc.

Later studies have expanded the debate to a view of political leadership, for example Tucker (1981), as described in Kakabadse and Kakabadse (2002) sees politics as leadership, where “*politics is considered as the active direction of a political community, and can be equated with leadership*”.

Of importance here is the notion of the Political group – elements not described in law, guidance or constitution, but central to the activity of an authority and the role of the politician. There is little evidence of academic research into this area.

### **1.1.3 The Practitioner Environment – the birth of the I&DeA**

During the period of this research, a number of events have occurred that have changed the landscape of understanding leadership in local government. In 2001, the Improvement and Development Agency for Local Government came into existence, with responsibility for driving improvement throughout the sector.

The first set of programmes surrounded creating a benchmark for the ideal authority, and using “peers”, serving senior members and officers, to share knowledge and drive improvement. Leadership development programmes were established for senior officers and members (the Leadership Academy) focusing on individual leadership within an organisation.

Professor Jo Sylvester of Goldsmiths, London was commissioned to produce a skills framework for politicians, based on key activities for successful members. In 2004, the I&DeA began work on a Top Team Development programme based on ten behaviours for highly successful teams.

However, there still remains no validated research exploring the understanding of top team leadership in the local authority context that would inform such programmes or activity.

#### **1.1.4 Overarching Purpose and Research Structure**

The overarching purpose of this research is to explore the void in academic and practitioner knowledge surrounding cabinet governance in the local government sector.

The research, therefore, seeks to explore the understanding held by those who occupy positions in Top Teams in local government as to what constitutes successful leadership in this new environment.

To do so, the research adopts a two-phase methodology.

Project 1 details a qualitative exploration framed within a social-constructivist perspective. It utilises a series of semi-structured interviews to elicit perceptions of members of the Cabinet and Senior Management team at RCT Council of their understanding of leadership within that specific authority.

This work was coded (pre and emergent codes) according to literature, and a framework relating to leadership in RCT constructed.

This framework demonstrated a number of constituent constructs: strategic leadership; role; background; capabilities; context; and political understanding.

Having evolved such a framework, the study then seeks to explore the validity of the model in the wider community, namely across the whole of local government. To do

this necessitated a shift in paradigm, to adopt a Positivist approach utilising quantitative methodologies.

Research by Kakabadse et al (1996) had shown the existence of a survey instrument (questionnaire) based on the concepts of Top Team Leadership that already enjoyed statistical validation across a range of contexts, with the exception of local government.

As such, Project 2 sought to adapt and amend the pre-validated instrument for usage within the local government context. Firstly, the questionnaire was adapted in terms of language and suitability to sector. Further, the constructs relating to political understanding and role (member/officer) constituted new areas not previously explored, so new scales were developed.

Face validation was achieved utilising a number of expert groups drawn from senior officers; members; and experts in utilising the research instrument, in an iterative process of amendment, until all involved agreed no further amendment necessary.

Project 3 seeks to achieve two things. Firstly, to test the validity of the amended research instrument in the local government context, with special reference to the specific contextual scales relating to political understanding and role.

Secondly, to test wider validity of the constructs derived from the framework in Project 1 through the scales in the questionnaire via the utilisation of a range of statistical techniques, including regression and correlation.

This would in turn provide a validated understanding of the constructs of leadership, together with a model of relation between said constructs and leadership performance.

## ***1.2 Philosophical Positioning & Research Methodology***

As noted above, the research in entirety entails a two phase methodology, moving from a Social Constructivist approach to a Positivist approach, and from qualitative methodologies to quantitative methodologies.

### **1.2.1 From Constructivism to Positivism**

Project 1 drew on the underlying assumptions of a socially constructed reality involving a value-laden environment. Its purpose was to secure the input of a range of individuals with a participant understanding of leadership in a Cabinet Team context, and then to explore that understanding with the objective of evolving a framework of leadership.

This necessitated a level of discourse in a semi-structured fashion, which prompted the adoption of a qualitative approach within the social constructivism school, allowing exploration of understanding, attributes and values.

For the social constructivist, the world exists not only in tangible format, but also through the interpretation of those who inhabit the world. Reality is the product of the meanings given to it by persons, community and society.

Project 2 represents a methodological paper that seeks to produce a suitable instrument to enable wider engagement, response and analysis based upon learning from the earlier qualitative study.

Project 3 explores whether the conceptual model, associated relationships and language developed from qualitative enquiry in Project 1 in the context of RCT Council have any degree of relevance in a wider context.



This necessitates a change of methodology to one allowing the testing of validity of constructs across a wider audience, and a shift to a more positivist approach.

### **1.2.2 The Two Phase Methodology**

The approach noted raises the question as to whether the two seemingly opposing paradigms can both be utilised within one research programme. The epistemological debate follows the embedded methods argument that quantitative and qualitative research is grounded in different paradigms, and work from incompatible epistemological principles.

Tashakkori and Tedlie (1998, p167) , however, suggests a more pragmatic approach, noting that the multi-strategy research approach may reduce the subjectivity and lack of generalisability associated with qualitative research, and the perceived lack of depth associated with quantitative research.

Qualitative research can inform quantitative research through the provision of hypotheses. The tendency of qualitative research to employ an unstructured, open-ended approach to data collection is deemed helpful as a source of hypotheses for testing.

Secondly, and of more direct consequence to our research, the in-depth knowledge of social construct and context acquired through qualitative research can be used to inform the design of question for survey or structured interviewing.

Such a multi-strategy approach means that the researcher no longer has to rely on either qualitative or quantitative techniques, but rather can buttress findings with methods drawn from other research strategies. It is based on the premise that all research strategies have something to offer, and that a congruence of substantive

findings from a diversity of methods will be inherently more able to stand greater external scrutiny.

It is this pragmatic approach that has been adopted for our research.

## 2 Summary – Project 1

### 2.1 Overview

The project proposes to explore the perceived leadership requirements of those incumbents who occupy a role in the top team of Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC in the context of change within the modernisation agenda being driven both legislatively by central government, and by necessity for change from a diverse range of stakeholders.

It involves an exploratory qualitative case study involving a series of semi-structured interviews exploring the understanding of leadership in a particular authority, namely Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council.

Following from the literature review, and taking into consideration the context facing Rhondda Cynon Taff Council, the research question was refined to the following.

*“How RCT CBC’s Top Team members experience and perceive their leadership challenges and questions”.*

A Conceptual Framework was drawn from literature and utilised as an instrument for coding respondents’ perceptions. The guiding theoretical underpinning is derived from the work of Hambrick and Mason (Upper Echelon Theory) and Kakabadse and Kakabadse (Top Team Theory).

Although much of the data from the interviews reflected the framework derived from literature (pre-coded results), a number of elements were emergent often relating to the political context of leadership in a local authority.

The theoretic conceptual framework was then adapted based upon the perceptions captured through coding.

## **2.2 Philosophical Positioning**

From an ontological perspective, the worldview taken for this stage of research is one of subjectivity and social construction, i.e. the world exists not only in tangible format, but also through the interpretation of those who inhabit that world. This leads us to a constructivist position, where reality is a product of the meanings given to it by persons, community and society.

Habermas (1970) described this, and other similar approaches, as interpretive models. Hence, the aim of our research is to *“appreciate the different constructions and meanings that people place upon their experience. The focus should be on what people, individually and collectively, are thinking and feeling”* (Easterby Smith, Thorpe and Lowe, 2002, p30).

The approach to the inquiry design follows the inductive logic based on learning drawn from Creswell (2003), Mukherji, and Hurtado (2001) and Prasad and Prasad’s (2002) work on qualitative methods. An interpretative research philosophy underpins this study and advocates the recognition of validity through the resonance found by participants in the outcomes of the research process.

## **2.3 Research Methodology**

Project 1 therefore represents an exploratory pilot study, entailing qualitative research involving two in-depth interviews with individuals from the ‘Top Team’ of RCT CBC, described as introductory interviews, followed by ten in depth interviews of an equal number of officers and politicians.

This involves the collection of qualitative data by means of face-to-face interviews. Following the work of Seidman (1998) and Creswell (2003), we note that qualitative research is flexible, allowing the researcher to modify the research questions, as more information on the subject becomes available.

Also, the research set out to explore complex perception patterns, and thus the data collection strategy had to afford the researcher humanistic interaction with the actors whilst allowing insider knowledge of the environment.

A quantitative strategy could not explore these nuances of perceptions required. Hence, a qualitative methodology employing semi-structured interviews was utilised.

The participants as framed by the research question and chosen methodology must be members of the ‘top team’, the Cabinet (both officer and politicians) in Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council.

Following the two introductory interviews, and the ten subsequent interviews, we enter a phase of data capture and reduction.

This phase of the methodology would be based around two processes. Firstly, a process based around “meaning condensation” (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Lee, 1999), the extraction of key themes from the interview text, using a combination of

pre-codes based around the themes noted from the literature, and a number of emergent codes to incorporate any new themes that emerge from the interviews.

The pre-coded constructs from literature were noted as being Role, Capabilities, Context and Background.

The data is then positioned in terms of the framework derived from literature to establish the level of resemblance between the perceptions of the participants involved in the study and the concepts described in literature.

The qualitative analysis software, QSR NVIVO 1.3 has been used for the management of the qualitative data and to facilitate the exploration of relationships between the categories, with care taken to maintain language as used by the participants.

## **2.4 Findings**

### **2.4.1 The Introductory Interviews**

The initial interviews demonstrated first and foremost that the usage of language utilised in academic and research circles were not wholly congruent with that of practitioners in the field, and hence the original interview design needed to be reviewed in terms of contextual language.

Also, the participants both extended the topics of discussion quite broadly, which whilst allowing greater richness of description and data capture, did necessitate greater flexibility on the part of the researcher.

However, it was quite clear that the constructs of role, capability, context and background were highly relevant to the perceptions of respondents.

## **2.4.2 The Main Interviews**

### **2.4.2.1 Background**

There has been much work surrounding demography and Top Team performance, though for the purpose of the Project 1, the focus clearly centred on the work of Hambrick and Mason (1984) and Upper Echelon Theory, describing specifically characteristics such as tenure, functional background and education.

Further analysis provided three child nodes (in NVivo terms), namely experience, training and cultural Exposure (either local, an affinity to the area, or wider, such as experience of other nations). These were seen to have close fit with the notions of upper Echelon Theory.

### **2.4.2.2 Role**

The elements of role described by participants were seen to fit well with Jaques (1951) notion of discretionary and prescribed activities; the work of Kakabadse and Kakabadse (1999) based on transactional and transformational leadership; and Upper Echelon Theory.

It should be noted once again that the language of respondents was based around their own context, more specifically using the terms strategic and operational, though with the additional notion of bureaucratic (including civic) activities. There was general acknowledgement of the role differential between members and officers, namely that members have responsibility (all be it supported by officers) to take decisions regarding the policy direction; officers have responsibility for operational matters; and members and officers take joint responsibility for strategic decisions. Both members and officers described the usage of time spent on bureaucratic activities.

Role discretion was raised, though it was clear that whilst officers did note a degree of role discretion, this was at a much lower level than the amount of role discretion described by members, with the converse being true for role prescription.

All participants also described the additional matter of role multiplicity, especially for members. This extended not only into participation on partnerships, but also sitting on the boards of other bodies as a result of an individuals' role on the authority, this being especially true for members.

An element of distinction was raised between the role of members and officers relating to electoral timescales. This related to the described need by members to transgress the operational divide into the role of officers as a result of the perceived necessity to deliver critical local matters on behalf of residents who elected them, and from whom members will potentially ask for further support at subsequent elections. This has been described as a source of tension.

A further element of importance was also described which related directly to members, namely that of salary and its relation to the ability to undertake duties. Whilst officers are employed on a full time basis, members are not, though the role (especially given the above noted multiplicity of roles) is becoming more so. However, the salary level associated with the position of cabinet member often necessitates individuals to maintain other concurrent paid employment. This has also been associated with comments surrounding issues of work-life balance, mentioned by both members and officers alike.

#### **2.4.2.3 Context**

The impact and importance of context on leadership matters has been well described in many academic studies, from the Contingency and Situational schools of leadership, through to the ongoing Kakabadse (and other) studies today.

The participants described perceptions surrounding their working environment and situation, specifically mentioning top teams, openness of working, political and external environments.

Of particular interest to this study were the concepts surrounding political drivers, environment and role, and the importance and role of the political group, something



not mentioned in local government guidance or literature at that time, nor explored in prior research.

There were a number of key elements raised in terms of necessary elements for the Top Team to be successful, including shared vision at a strategic level, an ability to have open dialogue, and cohesion, diversity of idea, and pulling together of the top team. These elements clearly reflected the work of Kakabadse and Kakabadse (1999).

Discussion also centred on the constitution of the Top Team. Some participants described the Top Team as the Cabinet itself in entirety (members only), some as a subset of the Cabinet; others described it as the Senior Management Team (officers only).

More importantly, some described the notion of “Team RCT”, of a coming together of the Cabinet and Senior Management Team into a single team. For me, this fits well with the notion of shared legitimacy of leadership of officers and members at the strategic decision making, or strategic leadership level – consistent with the role distinctions described by participants and guidance.

This led to the notion of what I have described in this research as the Cabinet Team, describing this point of joining of the member and officer teams. Later stages of this work extended the title to “Cabinet (or other) Team” to include the political government arrangements of other authorities who have embraced different titles, such as management board, or fourth option governance structures (akin to the traditional committee system, but retaining a split between decision making and scrutiny).

### **2.4.3 Capabilities**

The interview process elicited a wide range of responses leading to an extensive list of capabilities as perceived by members and officers that would be necessary within the Cabinet Team in overcoming the challenges of the organisation.

The described responses held close resemblance to the literature review, and were coded broadly under the child nodes of character (following the trait studies of Ghiselli, 1963 and Fiedler, 1970); competence, including strategic ability and creativity (Kakabadse and Kakabadse, 1999); and relational competences (Likert, 1961; Cyert and March, 1963).

## ***2.5 Contribution to Knowledge, Theory and Praxis***

### **2.5.1 Contribution to Academic Knowledge**

The starting point of this Project was a review of existing literature and research into leadership theory. The sheer volume of work on the topic led to a broad categorisation of leadership theory into a number of schools of thought, which I have drawn upon throughout the entirety of this research.

After deliberation, the guiding framework was taken to be that of Upper Echelon Theory (Hambrick and Mason, 1984) and Top Team Theory (Kakabadse and Kakabadse, 1999). However, research based upon such a framework has still not been undertaken in the local government context, and as such there is no validated model for said context.

Further, it is clear from the literature review that the Top Team, described here as the Cabinet (or other) Team, is different in structure to that of boards in either private or public sector contexts, given that there is no such formal structure.

Such a model has now evolved from the research in Project 1, all be it one based on a qualitative interpretive study, and as such is non-generalisable, but rather specific to the context of Rhondda Cynon Taff itself.

A key element of the emerging framework surrounds the nature of political influence, structure and process, and whilst issues surrounding elements as described by participants (commitment, stakeholder engagement, power, etc.) are relatable to prior

research, there has been no study of the political group itself at a local government level. This research has begun to explore that territory.

### **2.5.2 Contribution to Practitioner Knowledge**

At the time of writing, the notion of Cabinet Governance was new to local government circles, though being widely piloted to some extent in many authorities across the country.

Other than legislation and guidance itself, which referred only in broad terms to structural and process options, the only real support offered at that time was from the newly formed Improvement and Development Agency (I&DeA) in England. That body, whilst recognising the necessity of leadership as a key driver within the system, provided support tailored to individual leadership rather than team leadership.

Project 1 was undertaken, therefore, at time where there was a void in terms of leadership theory or development at the level of the Top Team. Thus, it began a dialogue, all be it specific to Rhondda Cynon Taff, surrounding the practicalities and perceptions of being part of a Top Team in local government, and created a framework that demonstrated a range of issues necessary to the success of that team, and hence the authority itself.

## **3 Summary – Project 2**

### **3.1 Overview**

#### **3.1.1 Purpose**

Project 2 seeks to bridge the theoretical and philosophical divide between the qualitative case study undertaken in Project 1, and Project 3 which will seek to test the validity of the leadership model derived from Project 1 more broadly across local government in England.

This project proposes to develop a suitable instrument that will allow the wider testing of the learning from Project 1, namely the adapted conceptual framework describing the perceptions of leadership understanding in the top team of Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC.

As such, it also represents a methodological paper that explores in depth the notion of a two-phase methodology encompassing two potentially opposing paradigms, namely constructivism and positivism, and the resultant techniques employed by those philosophical approaches, both qualitative and quantitative.

### **3.2 Philosophical Positioning**

Given the purpose described above relating to a shift in philosophical approach, a central part of Project 2 explored possible tensions surrounding a movement from a Constructivist standpoint to a Positivist position, and whether such a paradigm shift

had been employed elsewhere within academic circles. Further, if such an approach was possible, what were the implications for this research?

The resultant discussion and debate, together with implications, are described in Section 2 of this Chapter, Philosophical Positioning & Research Methodology, leading to the adoption of the Two Phase methodology.

Hence, the research adopted a pragmatic approach utilising the qualitative techniques necessary to extract a richness of information based on the perceptions of participants that was in turn utilised to inform a quantitative approach with the ambition of achieving generalisability and validity, central tenets to the scientific approach outlined by Popper.

### ***3.3 Research Methodology***

#### **3.3.1 Questionnaire Design**

The first element of this project in methodological terms surrounded the development of a questionnaire. Literature pointed to a number of considerations in respect of this, especially given the nature of the overarching Two Phase Methodology.

Firstly, the conceptual model derived from earlier qualitative research should directly inform the questionnaire design. It is important, therefore, that constructs pay attention to context and language. Further, given the constructivist nature of the origin of the model, there should at this point be no exploration of causality, but rather should allow expressions of strength of feeling or preference. Finally, only inhabitants who inhabit the context may be involved in any form of initial or face validation.

Oppenheim (2001, p100) put forward a number of broader considerations and principles for the detail and format of the questionnaire. Is the question open or closed? Is it a question of fact or opinion? The questionnaire should be clear and jargon free; a single question exploring two items should be avoided, as should leading questions.; a covering letter should explain the purpose of research, and instructions for completion; and one should start from factual questions before moving to points of opinion.

### **3.3.2 Amending an Existing Instrument**

A review of literature within the overarching framework of the Kakabadse research (1999) demonstrated the existence of a questionnaire that had been utilised and validated in a range of studies exploring Top Team Leadership in contexts other than local government.

Permission was requested and given to utilise this already validated instrument as the basis for a questionnaire to explore the generalisability of the leadership model derived in Project 1 across the local government sector.

Project 1 had already demonstrated a similarity of concept at face value between the scales utilised in the Kakabadse work and the evolving leadership model of this research.

Hence, initial work on adaptation surrounded mostly language changes given the specific context. Also, there proved a need to develop further potential scales to reflect additional concepts that had emerged from the qualitative research which were once again specific to the local government context.

This necessitated the inclusion of scales exploring perceptions regarding influencing and understanding political group processes, and notions specific to the role of members and officers.

Three expert groups were established to obtain a level of face validity of the amended questionnaire, these being practising leaders of councils; practitioners involved in senior officer development; and academics with a thorough knowledge of the existing Kakabadse instrument (namely Professors Andrew and Nada Korac-Kakabadse).

There then followed an iterative process of testing appropriateness of the questionnaire by each of the expert groups, with relevant amendments made after each response, until no further amendments were deemed necessary by each group.

### **3.4 Findings**

Given the pre-existing and already validated questionnaire utilised in the Kakabadse (1999) studies, the first stage involved a comparison of said questionnaire and its constituent scales with the leadership framework derived from project 1.

Given that Project 1 held the Kakabadse studies as a guiding framework, there was already a great deal of congruence between the two, and as such a great number of the scales utilised in the existing questionnaire were in conceptual terms transferable. Such scales included strategic leadership; working relationships; role expertise; top team cohesiveness; discretion; communication; customer focus; discipline; decision making; and culture.

Similarly, a number of scales were rejected as they were outside the remit of this study, such as IT; process expectation; and career success.

However, there were a number of emergent concepts from Project 1 that needed to be included, specifically surrounding the role and impact of the political group itself, and the difference in roles between members and officers – including issues such as salary for members; short term electoral imperatives; work-life balance issues etc.

The resultant questionnaire was then tested for face validity across the three groups of expert panels. As a result, there were a number of refinements in terms of language and grammar, together with a number of specific changes resulting from specific feedback from the expert groups.

Of specific note was the noted importance of the relevance of the term “Cabinet (or other) Team”. It was pointed out that this term would not be well understood or agreed with across the sector in relation to my postulation of it being that point where Cabinet Members and Senior Management Team officers join together for purposes of strategic leadership. Hence, specific reference was made to this term as a demographic point.

### ***3.5 Contribution to Knowledge, Theory and Praxis***

#### **3.5.1 Contribution to Academic Knowledge**

The amended questionnaire has reached a level of face validity in terms of both existing scales (although amended for contextual language) and emergent scales surrounding the political group and the differential roles of officers and members.

Implicitly, it has therefore demonstrated that the conceptual framework derived from the qualitative study in Project 1 has a wider acknowledgement in terms of the understanding of the constituent constructs.

Therefore, we have created a survey instrument which has obtained a level of face validity for exploration of top team leadership within the context of local government.

#### **3.5.2 Contribution to Practitioner Knowledge**



Project 2 would suggest that the concepts that were drawn out from literature and qualitative research in Project 1 appear to hold a degree of acceptance within the local government sector.

As such, it would suggest strategic development within an authority, and broader local government development activity, should explore not only leadership at the level of the individual, but also of the team.

Of interest, and for further exploration in Project 3, is the notion of the Cabinet (or other) team. Research so far would suggest that a perception by an individual of membership of this higher Top Team, and a feeling of satisfaction in job at such a level, might be important factors in determining leadership performance.

## **4 Summary – Project 3**

### **4.1 Overview**

The purpose of Project 3 is two-fold. Firstly, to test the validity of the amended questionnaire developed in project 2 across the local government sector in England.

Secondly, to test the reliability and validity of the constructs that constitute the scales contained in the questionnaire, and hence the validity of the model derived from the earlier qualitative research undertaken in Project 1.

To do so, the research adopted a Positivist approach as the second element of the Two Phase Methodology, through a quantitative methodology.

Thus, a range of hypotheses were tested to determine which, if any, elements of the leadership model derived from Project1 had a significant impact on leadership performance.

### **4.2 Philosophical Positioning**

This final element of the DBA programme, Project 3, adopts a Positivist stance, availing itself of quantitative methodologies utilising a range of statistical techniques, such as descriptive statistics, regression analysis, and correlation.

This was deemed necessary as it is only such widely accepted scientific process that offers the rigour of analysis and levels of objectivity that would allow statements as to validity, generalisability and reliability.

### **4.3 Research Methodology**

The research utilises a survey methodology to explore and test perceptions across the breadth of audience of local government. The survey utilises the questionnaire that achieved face validation in Project 2, namely the instrument adapted from the Kakabadse and Kakabadse studies (1999).

The original notion was to generate a sample for analysis that included all serving councillors serving in a Cabinet, or Officers serving in a Senior Management Team. This was deemed impractical for two reasons.

Firstly, there is no single list that is regularly updated that contains the names and contact points of either Cabinet or Senior Management Team Members. Secondly, from a pragmatic and economic standpoint, given that there are 388 Councils in England, that would have led to a possible sample size of potentially 7760 participants.

As a result, a decision was made to use a sample involving Leaders and Chief Executives only, and to test their perceptions of the constructs relating to successful top team leadership.

The survey received a response rate of over 20%, for members and officers both jointly, and as separate clusters.

The results were then collated and analysed. Firstly, the questionnaire scales were tested for validity utilising Cronbach's alpha. Further, the constituent concepts (demographic variables, role, strategic leadership, context, and political group

understanding and influence, were tested for significance and impact upon leadership performance.

This utilised a range of techniques from the field of descriptive statistics, together with correlation and regression analysis.

## 4.4 Findings

### 4.4.1 Questionnaire Validity

**Table 1 Cronbach Alpha Score for Questionnaire Scales**

Scale	Alpha
Authority Culture	0.88
Communication - personal input	0.85
Strategic Leadership	0.85
Job Satisfaction	0.84
Pulling Together	0.83
Attention to Customer Care	0.8
Cohesive Top Team	0.79
Independence	0.79
Communication - Authority Input	0.77
Diverse Top Team	0.73
Leadership Performance	0.73
Political Group Understanding and Influence - Member and Officer	0.73
Discipline	0.7
Customer Focus	0.69
Autonomy	0.68
Role Issues – members	0.49
Cabinet Team - decision making	0.4
Role Issues - member and officer	0.3
Political Group Understanding and Influence- Member only	0

The above table demonstrates the Cronbach Alpha score, or level of internal validity, of each of the scales. The study adopts a fairly robust acceptance level of 0.6, and thus we can see that all scales with the exception of the last four were sent to be valid in the local government sector.

#### 4.4.2 Significance Testing

The following table shows those scales (or individual constructs where the scale as a whole demonstrated a lack of validity) that demonstrated a significant impact on leadership performance, plus the level of that significance, resulting from the regression analysis.

As detailed, only one construct held significance at the  $p < 0.005$  level, namely the perception of the individual as to whether or not they were members of the joint Cabinet (or other) team. The cross tabulation of responses between clusters of members, and then officers, demonstrated that members were more likely to feel membership of the group than officers.

**Table 2 Significance Levels for Questionnaire Scales or Elements**

Scale	Element	Significance
Demographics	Member of Cabinet Team	$P < 0.005$
Role (Cllr & officer)	Bureaucratic Processes (-ve)	$P < 0.05$
Role (Cllr only)	Salary as a barrier (-ve)	$P < 0.05$
Role (Cllr only)	Electoral cycle / s.t. decisions	$P < 0.05$
Job Satisfaction	The Scale	$P < 0.001$
Strategic Leadership	Strategic Leadership	$P < 0.001$
Strategic Leadership	Diversity of Ideas (-ve)	$P < 0.05$
Cabinet Decisions	Quality of Decision Making	$P < 0.001$
Cabinet Decisions	Secret Decisions (-ve)	$P < 0.05$
Group Understanding	The Scale	$P < 0.01$
Context	Communication - Authority	$P < 0.05$

Three scales held significance at the  $p < 0.001$  level, namely Strategic Leadership, quality of decision making (an individual construct from Cabinet Decision Making Ability) and Job Satisfaction.

Three specific elements of role had significant impact, namely spending time undertaking bureaucratic activities; electoral cycles driving short term decision making; and salary being a barrier.

Other variables demonstrating significant impact upon leadership performance were communication on an authority wide level; diversity of ideas within the Cabinet Team; making decisions in secret (from the scale relating to Cabinet decision Making Ability); and understanding and influencing political group processes.

These results demonstrate clearly the relevance and reliability of the constructs derived from the qualitative study undertaken in Project 1.

#### 4.4.3 R Squared Results

The regression analysis also produces an R Squared score that demonstrates the level of explanation of one variable on another. These cores are shown in the following table.

**Table 3 R Squared Scores for Questionnaire Scales or Elements**

Scale	R Squared / %
Demographics	0.109 / 10.9%
Role (Cllr & officer)	0.248 / 24.8%
Job Satisfaction	0.183 / 18.3%
Strategic Leadership	0.477 / 47.7%
Cabinet Decisions	0.284 / 28.4%
Group Understanding	0.201 / 20.1%
Context	0.204 / 20.4%

Once again, this demonstrates the level of generalisability of the constructs contained in the original leadership framework more broadly across the sector.

#### **4.4.4 Correlation Analysis**

The correlation analysis produced a range of results demonstrating significant correlation between variables, which whilst demonstrating positive and negative significant relationships between the variables, added little to the picture above.

### **4.5 *The Hypotheses***

A number of distinct hypotheses were postulated, emanating from the concepts drawn from the initial qualitative research, as follows.

#### Hypothesis H1

Demographic variables in isolation (length of tenure, age; member of cabinet team; political context) have a significant impact on leadership performance. This hypothesis is partially accepted, in that only Perceptions of Cabinet Team Membership have a significant impact.

#### Hypothesis H2a

Perceptions and understanding of role have a significant impact on leadership performance. This is partially accepted, as three individual elements, namely spending time undertaking bureaucratic activities; electoral cycles driving short term decision making; and salary being a barrier, have a significant impact.

#### Hypothesis H2b

Job satisfaction has a significant impact on leadership performance. This is wholly accepted.

#### Hypothesis H3a

Strategic leadership has a significant impact on leadership performance. This is partially accepted, as two of the constituent scales, Strategic Leadership and Diversity of Ideas have a significant impact.

#### Hypothesis H3b

Cabinet Decision Making Ability has a significant impact on leadership performance. This is partially accepted, as two individual constructs, namely quality of decision making, and making decisions in secret, have a significant impact.

#### Hypothesis H4

Understanding and influencing group political processes has a significant impact on leadership performance. This is partially accepted, as the elements relating to bureaucratic processes, salary being a barrier and electoral cycles driving short term decision making each have a significant (negative) impact on leadership performance.

#### Hypothesis H5

Context has a significant impact on leadership performance. This hypothesis is partially accepted, as one individual construct has a significant impact, namely communication at an authority wide level.



## ***4.6 Contribution to Knowledge, Theory and Praxis***

### **4.6.1 Contribution to Academic Knowledge**

Firstly, we address the question of significance of the questionnaire.

The validated scales, in order of reliability based on the Cronbach Alpha scale, are Authority Culture; Communication – personal; Strategic Leadership; Job Satisfaction; Pulling Together; Attention to Customer Care; Cohesive Top Team; Independence; Communication – authority; Diversity of Idea; Leadership Performance; Political Group Understanding and influence (Member and Officer); Discipline; Customer Focus; and Autonomy.

Hence, these scales are considered valid for the purposes of on-going research into top teams in the local government context.

The following scales did not meet the required level of validity, and are therefore not accepted, namely Role Issues (Members Only); Cabinet Team Decision Making Ability; Role Issues (Member and Officer); and Political Group Understanding and Influence.

These scales warrant further research, especially those related to Political Understanding and Influence and role, given the level of significance that a number of the constituent constructs hold in terms of impact on leadership performance.

Moreover, two specific aspects relating to the context of local authorities have been brought to light as significant for the first time. Firstly, the notion of the Cabinet (or other) Team as postulated in Project 1, and secondly the understanding and influence of political group processes.

Both of these have as yet received attention in the academic world, and given their level of significance, warrant further research.

More broadly, the survey response undertaken allows a range of other analyses to be undertaken, for example exploring the results clustered by other demographic factors such as gender.

#### **4.6.2 Contribution to Practitioner Knowledge**

Much of the theory, guidance, development, audit process and even legislation, in local government places leadership at the heart of successful governance and organisations. This research demonstrates that this is absolutely true, with the scales relating to Strategic Leadership providing a 47.7% predictor for Leadership performance.

This speaks, therefore, of the need to develop a coherent vision over the long term, to build consensus across the Cabinet Team, combined with an ability to raise, explore and resolve sensitive issues across the membership of the team. And here, we mean the whole team – of members of the Cabinet and officers from the Senior Management Team together.

As a result, constitutions, guidance et al need to speak to more than just process, but also to relationship and behaviour, with resultant implications for the type of development programmes available.

Also, given that 24.8% of leadership performance is explainable by matters of role, discussions in each authority to explore role definition (and barriers to effectively carrying out role) are significant. One such thorny issue surrounds payment of members.

Importance has also been demonstrated of the political group, its processes, personnel, and methods of influencing it. This is an area that few members, and yet fewer officers, have great understanding of outside of their own direct context. Further, the relationship between the group, its members, and the Council itself requires greater exploration within each authority. This research does not suggest that there is one

particular solution to this, or indeed any other, point. However, it does suggest that clarity about such issues would result in greater levels of leadership performance.

#### ***4.7 The Final Analysis***

The analysis taken thus far demonstrates that the model derived from literature and qualitative interviews in Project 1, together with associated elements and constructs, maintains validity in the local government context.

We have arrived at a position where the associated correlation analysis demonstrates that many of the elements have significant levels of relatedness, and the regression analysis denotes a number of constructs that have greater significant impact upon leadership performance than others.

However, this still poses the question – given that our desired position is one of successful leadership performance, and that the greatest impact upon this is strategic leadership capability – what are the key influences upon that construct.

More specifically, should there be a function on role, function, job satisfaction, or on the team dynamic itself. This necessitated a greater degree of analysis, and the employment of a methodology known as partial correlation analysis.

This demonstrated to a satisfactory level of significance, that it is indeed a focus upon the team which is critical, and it is this which should be the focus above all else.

This leads us to consider the initial framework drivers in academic terms, namely Upper Echelon Theory (Hambrick and Mason, 1984) and Top Team Theory (Kakabadse and Kakabadse, 1999).

The former holds heavy reliance upon demographic theory (with specific importance held by background and role), whilst the latter focuses on top team dynamics, including top team context, role, strategic visioning, and more importantly in our context, the dynamics of the top team itself.

Hence, in the specific context of Cabinet Governance in local government, this research would advocate the position undertaken by Kakabadse and Kakabadse as the most helpful guiding framework and point of reference.

## **5 Reflections**

In this section, I will attempt to provide some reflection on the research undertaken in this thesis, which has been undertaken over a period of six years. During this time both academic research and practice surrounding leadership matters in local government have undergone significant change and development.

Similarly, my personal and professional life has undergone significant change and development during that period. On a personal level, this has included marriage; the birth of my child; a house move; and a number of car crashes. Professionally, I have been through two elections in during the research period. At the first election, my Party lost political control of the authority. This meant that I had to find other employment and funding for this academic study.

### ***5.1 Reflections on the DBA***

Before considering limitations and implications of research, I would first reflect on the DBA process itself. The DBA, or Executive Doctorate, is designed for those able to bring extensive practitioner experience to bear on academic research surrounding an issue. It is designed as a five year part time programme, broken down into three distinct projects together with a linking document.

An obvious advantage, therefore, is that it allows the researcher to continue his or her professional career and development, bringing any new insight gained through research quickly to support professional issues and vice-versa. Further, the separation into smaller projects allows learning and prevailing professional challenges to influence the nature and purpose of subsequent project work.

However, at the conclusion of this study it has become apparent that this project based nature has given rise in part to a lack of continuity of argument between projects that would perhaps have been less apparent had there been a single project.

The extent has been accentuated to a degree as a result of change of personal circumstances. The nature of my role as a politician has meant that I have been involved in two elections to my own council, both requiring extensive campaigns for re-election. Also, my national role as an improvement peer has meant that I have been significantly involved in the elections of other authorities, both during the elections and then through support of any resultant change of administrations.

This has further created a pressure to achieve conclusion of projects, with an emphasis on individual project completion, broken between electoral cycles on an almost annual basis, as opposed to continuation of argument.

Also, on a personal and professional level, I have changed job twice during this period, been involved in two car crashes (one causing a year break – hence the six year programme), and had a child, adding yet more distraction to the research cycle.

One impact of this surrounds continuity of the purpose of research itself. At the inception of research, I undertook to understand the drivers of successful leadership in top teams in local government.

However, further research and depth of understanding quickly demonstrated that the topic was far too broad, hence the research became more specific, namely understanding the constituent elements and criteria for successful leadership, rather than attempting to compare any constituent constructs with specific measurements of success.

This resulted in analysis utilising the pre-validated survey scale of leadership performance from the Kakabadse-Kakabadse (1996) instrument, rather than attempting to measure success.

As can be seen above, there is a lack of continuity between projects, evidenced not only by the thread of argument being unclear, but even the language moving between that of academic and practitioner, depending upon which element of life had been prevalent at the time of writing.

Similarly, there are occasional “knowledge jumps” or assumptions that are not clearly derived from research or literature, where advances have been made in the professional world surrounding local government leadership development that I have brought into analysis without reference.

## **5.2 Reflections on the Limitations of Research**

At the conclusion and writing of this research, there are a number of topics and limitations that I feel require raising and clarifying.

The first issue surrounds methodology. The approach adopted is that of a two phase methodology; a qualitative study is undertaken to inform a quantitative survey. Although widely discussed in Project 2, one specific implication of methodology was not explored.

This relates to the nature of qualitative data – given that the survey captures data surrounding perceptions, how can we suggest wider validity of construct resulting from analysis of that data given that the perceptions that individuals record are dependent upon their context at one specific point of time, and are therefore unlikely to provide identical answers on a subsequent occasions?

In essence, there is no solution to this problem. The value of qualitative research is that it does capture perceptions under a prevailing context. The sample size is designed to be large enough that such variations are indeed captured, and to allow significance to be tested.

A longitudinal survey, taking a second snapshot in 12 – 18 months will allow a degree of comparison, although there is no guarantee that the sample elements will be the same as Leaders and Chief Executives change, and perhaps a different set of individuals might respond.

The second issue is that of response rate. Whilst a response rate of 20%, in my experience of local government research papers involving leaders and chief

executives, appears strong, by definition 80% of the sample did not respond. This thesis does not attempt to explore whether or not there was any bias in the sample of respondents.

Anecdotally, however, I would suggest that in demographic terms, an 80-20 ratio of men to women; a median age category of 50-59; and an 80-20 ratio of district to county would seem appropriate.

The third issue relates to the Likert scale itself. On reflection, it is apparent that the utilisation of a 5 Point Likert Scale in itself is forcing the respondent to choose between levels of agreement based upon perception. However, the instrument as distributed, whilst describing the first and fifth points of the scale, failed to describe the second, third and fourth points. So, for example, if you choose the mid-point on a scale, the respondent would not be clear whether it shows indifference, mild agreement or indeed any other shading of perception.

However, it should be noted that when the instrument was tested with the relevant expert groups in Project 2, this is not an issue that was raised with any of the groups, including that group with expertise in using the methodology.

This leads to the final issue – given that I followed a methodology and instrument utilised in prior research by others, did I feel constrained by methodology? In reflection, I feel perhaps the answer is no.

My intention had been to utilise the methodology to explore where constructs relating to top team leadership in local governance differed from other contexts. To this extent, I feel it was necessary to hold closely to the undertaken methodology, and indeed, this did produce a number of elements that have caused both myself and others to adapt their approach to local government development, as outlined in the following section.

Rather, I think one thing that has become clear in concluding this study has been my own shift in world view. Previously, my background had been highly positivist in approach, with development having taken place in the fields of econometrics,



accountancy and operational research. This study has broadened my field of research activity into constructivist interpretive approaches, which have proven highly appropriate in political environments. My opinion is that I may have attempted during analysis to cling to positions of fact too closely, and that further exploring judgement may have yielded deeper understanding.

### ***5.3 Reflections on the Implications for Academia and Praxis***

When undertaking development work in local government circles, especially with authorities that are perceived to be poorly performing, an oft quoted perception of those involved is that there are far too many boundaries in the local government world to allow choice, let alone leadership.

For me, one of the main tenets that I draw from this research is that leadership is entirely possible in, and indeed central to, local government change, improvement and development. Moreover, I have established a number of factors and criteria that bring significant impact upon the context at hand.

The regression analysis pointed to the fact that the construct with greatest significance and effect on Leadership Performance was Strategic Leadership Ability, linked to the ability to deal with diverse ideas.

At the conclusion of the research, I utilised partial correlation analysis for further explanation, asking the question “what is leadership in local government really about?” The result was clear – team dynamics.

As these results came through, they began to indicate to me that a new approach to development was needed for effective improvement in a local authority.

A clear example of where this was successfully applied was in Bromsgrove District Council, which in 2005 was described as one of the poorest performing authorities in the UK, and one which was in Voluntary Engagement with Government Office.

The development approach taken was one which focused on one of the constructs having significant impact on leadership performance, the construct described in this research as the Cabinet Team. This meant that a development focus was given to both Cabinet Members and the Senior Management Team, both separately and jointly.

The programme of development rather than consisting of traditional management and leadership development modules, was in essence a series of discussions. These included values, visioning, priorities, role, outcomes and action planning, with regular update sessions for updating and raising issues, challenges and successes.

Indeed, six months later performance had risen dramatically, and a year later, the authority had progressed to such a significant point that it was considered able to come out of engagement.

Similar approaches are now being deployed in local authorities across the UK, including a number where I am personally involved such as West Somerset (led by one of the Group Leaders at the LGA), Mid Devon, Belfast, Mendips, South Cambridgeshire, and many more.

## **5.4 Further Research**

In terms of further research, I would wish to outline two distinct areas. Firstly, further exploration and analysis of the data collected within this project and applied to the specific sphere of local government.

For example, the initial analysis produced a range of statistics focusing on demographic factors, with a specific clustering utilised that allowed comparisons between politicians and officers as required by the research.

However, the data was collected in a format that would allow other clusters to be utilised and comparisons drawn. For example, we could take gender – does leadership

within a top team have different understanding and implication dependent upon gender? Similar analysis could be undertaken for age.

Also, the data allows analysis by classification or size of authority, so one could explore whether there were differing constructs that have varying degrees of significance dependent upon whether it was a district, county or unitary authority. This question currently holds some significance in England as there is an on-going process of creating unitary authorities, with five moving through transition this year, and more to begin the process next year.

As already discussed above, this research has not undertaken an analysis of successful leadership in a quantifiable way, as it was felt that there was no single identifiable statistical construct to do so – rather, the analysis utilised the validated scale of leadership performance from the Kakabadse questionnaire.

However, since the inception of the project the Audit Commission has carried out regular Corporate Performance Assessments of authorities which have established a grading based upon an actual score.

This would allow us to use both correlation and regression techniques to establish those leadership constructs that display significance against a distinct and understood performance score. However, from my own experience, many politicians and officers would not describe the criteria used by the Audit Commission as those which best measure success of the authority.

Secondly, we come to wider possible application of the methodology. Already, I have been invited to consider undertaking similar research utilising the framework of this project to explore Cabinet leadership in the National Assemblies of Ireland and Wales.

Further, the world of local government is continually enlarging in terms of its axis of influence. The onset of Local Area Partnerships and Agreements (and now Multi Area Partnerships and Agreements) indicates that the research would provide some insight

into team leadership dynamics of such bodies, especially given the constituency of politicians within the bodies.

Also, there are other bodies who have similar board arrangements with local politicians as board members – for example the Police and Fire Authorities, Health Authorities, University Governors etc – a similar methodology could be adapted and utilised for each.

As such, the research must clearly be seen as a beginning of a journey rather than an end itself.

# Cranfield University

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D.B.A.

## **PROJECT 1**

2005

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Understanding Leadership in Local Government

Supervisor: Professor Andrew Kakabadse  
Professor Nada Korac-Kakabadse  
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## **6 Project 1 – An Exploration of the Perceptions and Understanding of Top Team Leadership in Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC**

### **6.1 Overview**

#### **6.1.1 Context**

Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council (RCT CBC) is the second largest Unitary Authority in Wales. At present, it is undergoing a process of change driven in legislative terms by the modernisation agenda, and in terms of service delivery requirements by consumer demand for quality and choice at reduced cost.

In the 1999 local government elections in Wales, the authority experienced a change in political leadership for the first time in over 50 years, from Labour to Plaid Cymru, due in no small part to the perceived shortcomings in the previous leadership. In the three years that followed, this change has been echoed by an almost complete turnover in terms of senior management.

As a result of new legislation, May 2002 saw the formal introduction of the “Cabinet” model of government, creating for the first time a “leadership team” composed of members and officers.

The problem facing the authority is perceived as follows. Given the need to dramatically improve service delivery in an environment of continually reducing available funding, effective performance of the Cabinet is critical. This creates the need for an understanding of what the main challenges facing such a leadership team might encompass in such a context, which capabilities are critical for members of that team in meeting those challenges, and what the resultant development needs are.

### 6.1.2 Statement of Purpose

The context in which local government exists has become one of rapid change. Local Councils in Wales are increasingly pressurised to improve choice and quality of service with greater efficiency and less financial support than ever before. The Modernisation Agenda of Central Government, newly manifested in the Cabinet Model of governance, is driving authorities to greater levels of performance and professionalism whilst increasing accountability and local community participation in decision-making. Wales has recently moved to a devolved government with the National Assembly for Wales, creating a whole new raft of policies requiring implementation, often without regard to capacity in human, knowledge or financial terms.

One of the critical success factors in any organisation at a time of change is leadership. The aim of this research is to identify, if possible, a framework within the set context of a modernised local government that will create the optimum opportunity for delivering the outcomes required by the multitude of stakeholders, namely a context dependent 'leadership best practice' in terms of capabilities, practices and their development.

The **purpose** of the research is to gain an understanding of those capabilities and practices that may constitute a framework for 'leadership best practice' within a local authority context, for both politicians and Council Officers.

Further, to see if those lessons are transferable in differing levels of government or participation.

This will hopefully lead to a change in the process and structure of development programmes for successful leadership given an appreciation of those capabilities that are most valued at a time of change, and an evolution of contextual practices which impact on performance, such as the airing of sensitive issues, participation in decision making processes, sharing and cohesion of vision, etc.



My feeling is that there is likely to be a fairly generic set of capabilities and practices to be found across local government, which may well hold true at devolved government level. In fact, I would expect to see a level of similarity across any body where there are executive officers and a board of directors, or variants, as my contention would be that the capability set would be role dependent on the basis of the occupant's role.

The aim of Project 1 is to gain an insight into the perceptions of members of the Top Team in Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council about the nature of the challenges that they face, together with the capabilities that those members see as being key to meeting those challenges.

The results obtained may present a pattern as previously drawn out in the Cranfield Top Executive Competence Studies. It may also generate a number of described challenges and associated capability requirements specific to the context of local government.

More importantly, it will provide a rich context led, value-laden description of the present reality of a specific local government top team in the language utilised by its participants.

This learning will allow further exploration to be undertaken in later projects to re-draft the questionnaire associated with the Cranfield Studies, and hence to assess the validity of the Kakabadse Framework in a local government framework via an all Wales survey, establishing whether the outcomes from Project I are replicated across Wales.

### **6.1.3 Background**

#### **6.1.3.1 Rhondda Cynon Taff**

Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council was formed in 1996 from the three districts of the former Mid Glamorgan County Council, and is the second largest Unitary Authority in Wales in population terms, with a total of 250,000 people living in the area. The County Borough occupies an area of 44,000 hectares in the South Wales Valleys stretching from the Brecon Beacons in the North to Cardiff in the South, an area previously dominated by coal mining. Transport tends to run north to South by road and rail, with routes across being more difficult.

The three geographical districts that make up Rhondda Cynon Taff share a range of common socio-economic and cultural characteristics with high levels of relative poverty and social exclusion, particularly in the northern valleys, which have some of the highest deprivation indicators in the UK.

One third of the population (some 80,000 residents) live in 17 electoral divisions which are ranked amongst the 100 most deprived parts of Wales – twice as large as in any other local authority in Wales. Housing stock is old, the majority being pre1920, much of it in very poor condition, with the Council still providing 12,000 council houses throughout the area. Health indicators are also some of the poorest in Wales, demonstrating a 10-year difference in life expectancy between the north and south of the County Borough.

The unemployment rate in the area is 9.2%, which compares unfavourably with the rate for Wales of 7.2%. It also disguises more severe levels of inactivity because of the large number of people claiming incapacity benefit and income support, with skill levels being low against national averages. Whilst there are a number of large organisations, the majority of the business sector comprises a myriad of Small and Medium Size Enterprises (SME's), of which there are a high number of start ups each year, together with a correspondingly high number of failures.

### **6.1.3.2 Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council**

The County Borough Council was formed through the amalgamation of three separate Borough Councils (Rhondda, Cynon Valley and Taff Ely) together with the corresponding geographical section of Mid Glamorgan County Council at the onset of Local Government Reorganisation in Wales in 1996.

It is the largest single employer in Wales, currently with some 14,000 staff, a high percentage of which also reside within the geographical area of the County Borough. The Authority has a core revenue budget of some £280m per annum (though in real terms this has been reducing on an annual basis for many years) and a capital budget of some £40m. Recent budget rounds have seen increases in “policy” funding which provides opportunity for expanding service provision in new areas as targeted by the National Assembly for Wales.

The Council occupies a total of 102 offices throughout the County Borough, often in quite disparate locations, creating communication difficulties. The IT infrastructure is poor.

Following the local government elections in 1999, there was for the first time a change of Political leadership in the Valleys. The new leadership inherited an authority with negative reserves (an illegal position for a government body), an £11m budget gap (with associated pressure from the District Auditor). There was a vacuum in terms of strategic instruments in the authority – no corporate plan, no cost centres, no performance framework, and a corporate structure under pressure to change.

### **6.1.3.3 The Modernisation Agenda**

At the same time as this shift in political leadership, a new form of management was introduced via legislation, initially in pilot form, in 1999, commonly known as the Modernisation Agenda. The system involved a shift from a committee structure previously utilised by local government, to a cabinet structure, with the aim of increasing accountability and responsibility.

The formal introduction occurred in May 2002, and has resulted in new political management systems throughout Wales. Decision-making powers within service portfolios were transferred from committees to individual Cabinet Members, with the prime vehicle for policy and decision making becoming the Cabinet itself, comprising no more than ten members. This created a new focus for the authority, with the Cabinet together with the Chief Officers servicing the Cabinet becoming the driving force for change, the first instance of a formally defined team being recognised in local government.

#### **6.1.3.4 The Policy Process in RCT CBC**

With this shift in the form of leadership in local government came a new constitutional procedure for decision making, involving both formal and informal mechanisms and processes.

Under the new system, the process would be as follows:

- An issue would come forward due to either statutory or situational drivers, raised by either officer or member
- With agreement of both cabinet member and officer, the officer will produce a briefing based around objective, legislative, financial and subjective information, with some initial outlines as to policy options.
- This report is continually re-defined through dialogue between the officer and cabinet member, balancing both the professional and political perspectives, until both member and officer approve the content.
- The report is then explored by the officer Senior Management Team to ensure corporate fit and approve content, and is re-drafted until the Chief Executive allows the report to move forward.
- The Chief Executive presents the report to the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council for consent to place the report on the agenda for an Informal Cabinet meeting.
- The Informal Cabinet meets in closed session, where the member of the SMT with group responsibility for the item will present the report, supported by the

relevant cabinet member. Here, the report will be debated by members and officers in terms of corporate and political implications. An amended report will then be sent to Formal Cabinet for formal approval, though this is subject to the informal Group Process outlined below.

- Between the Informal and Formal Cabinet, the Leader, Deputy Leader, or Cabinet Member will present the report to their Political Group for approval. Even though the Group has no formal recognition under the local government constitution, it is this consent from the political community, where policy is considered spatially by local members in terms of stakeholder groups and resident impact, that determines the final shape of the report that comes forward.
- On Group approval, the report moves forward to the Formal Cabinet meeting, a public forum, where the report is ratified and adopted formally as Council policy.
- The next stage is the creation of an implementation action plan based upon capacity in human and budgetary terms, within set timescales and with performance and outcome targets. This discussion is initially between relevant Cabinet Member and Officer.
- When the action plan is deemed acceptable by both Cabinet Member and officer, the resultant report with recommendations moves to a cabinet sub group, the Revenue / Capital Working Group, chaired by the Deputy Leader, and consisting of six cabinet members together with the service and performance Divisional Directors who have responsibility for delivering the action plan within budget.
- The report follows as similar Informal / Formal process to the cabinet itself.
- On approval, the action plan is passed to the relevant officers for delivery as per the programme outlined, in association with the relevant cabinet member.
- The Revenue / Capital Working Group monitor progress.
- Performance reports are produced and circulated to both the Cabinet and Scrutiny side of the Council, which will lead to amendments to the action plan or policy amendment as appropriate.

#### **6.1.4 Research Issue**

The issue under consideration is therefore to explore those factors that are perceived to constitute leadership within the specific context of local government in Wales within a developmental framework.

This also creates a necessity to explore perceptions of that context that make any such determinants perceived to be valuable, together with the derivation of an implicit notion of what constitutes “good” , “quality” or “successful” leadership in such a context, though it should be noted that such a determination is not the purpose of research.

#### **6.1.5 Chapter summary**

The project therefore proposes to explore the perceived leadership requirements of those incumbents who occupy a role in the top team of Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC in the context of change within the modernisation agenda being driven both legislatively by central government, and by necessity for change from a diverse range of stakeholders.

## **6.2 Theoretical Positioning**

### **6.2.1 Introduction**

The question of leadership has proven to be one the most long running debates in Business Research, reaching into the fields of history, philosophy, psychology, economics, business, management and more.

The topic has covered types of leader, moral philosophy, personality and trait analysis, role analysis and context analysis. The differences between leaders such as Ghandi and Social Movement Leaders, through to great military leaders such as Alexander the Great and Napoleon, have created speculation as to the specific characteristics that separate one leader from another.

Despite the level of debate and the depth of research running to more than half a century, even the definition of leadership, let alone its composition, core themes and attributes, remains to be confirmed in universally acceptable terms.

Some view leadership as the personal relationship between the individual and the group (Jeannot, 1989), others feel that leadership belongs more to moral philosophy than scientific theory, taking moral values as the central theme. Semler (1993) described leadership as the process of striving towards common goals and values.

A further range of authors pursue the argument that leadership reflects aspects of behaviour, whether individuals are in control of specific situations, or reactive and driven by the environment (Kouzes & Posner, 1987).

Leadership has also been likened to the wielding of power, though this has been widely argued against. Burns (1978) differentiated between the exercise of power and the exercise of leadership, the difference being morality

Burns (1978) noted that “The ultimate test of moral leadership is its capacity to transcend the claims of the multiplicity of everyday needs and expectations, to

respond to the higher levels of moral development and relate to leadership behaviour ..... and to a set of reasoned, explicit, conscious values”.

This simple introduction provides some insight into the many different perspectives of leadership. Kakabadse and Kakabadse (1999) similarly outlined a range of descriptions:

- A distinct kind of work that may or may not be required according to conditions
- Akin to a strong motivation or drive, spurring individuals to act irrespective of office
- Not always necessary – steadily achieved success is attainable through strong management
- Linked to the exercise of power so that a vision can be realised through the mobilisation of resources

Further, that effective leadership requires a number of capabilities:

- Broad capability; knowledge of products / services, combined with functional skills, matched by drive, energy and a capacity for problem solving
- A high level of people skills combined with high conceptual skills, so that opportunities can be spotted, analysed, verbalised, and turned into future actual opportunities
- Sound judgement, attention to detail, conceptualisation and intuition
- The balancing of ambition and conscience ; harnessing drive with the desire to be fully responsible
- The need to be astute, not seeking power for it's own sake, knowing how to work through ambiguities

Such descriptions have been brought forward through a range of studies, which have been grouped below into a number of schools of thought.



## **6.2.2 Literature review - Schools of Leadership Thought**

The following attempts to distil and separate some of the above perspectives into a range of broad classifications, and as such outline in broad terms the development of the body of academic work relating to Leadership.

Further, I hope to build a conceptual model of leadership as it applies to leadership within a top team in Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC based on each of these schools of thought on a progressive basis.

### **6.2.2.1 The Born to Lead School**

The body of work that has become known as the Born to Lead School has sought to establish a set of characteristics that set apart superior individuals from others, so that the abilities could be sought and, if possible, developed in others.

This became encapsulated by the Nineteenth Century view of leadership, one in essence based on a defined set of characteristics rather than a moral core. The school of thought was characterised by Nietzsche's (1969) concept of the *Urbarmensch*, or superman, predicated on the basis that great leaders are "possessed of a unique ability to transform as a result of an exceptional human nature" (Kakabadse and Kakabadse, 1999).

Through these pre-ordained capabilities, the *Urbarmensch* casts aside the current social, political, religious or philosophical core, replacing it with a whole new value system, and as such becomes the catalyst for a radical transformation of society through destructiveness, superiority and domination.

The trait school evolved from this, and numerous academics have through their own research added to a continually enlarging list of desirable attributes. A number of these are mentioned below, though the list is certainly not exhaustive. It does, however, demonstrate the variety of attributes of personality that "shine through".

Research by Stodgill (1974) established the following notions as important, namely a nurturing behaviour, personal integrity, and the necessity of maintaining performance standards. Ghiselli (1963) noted that successful leaders are driven to act independently, and are self-assured. Other 'trait' school advocates have even contended that physical stature is important, one study establishing that in a group of leaders, there is preponderance to greater height than average. Research by Fiedler (1970) noted that successful leaders are more perceptive.

Bass (1985) suggests that transformational leadership requires three characteristics, namely Charisma, the ability to instil a sense of value, respect and pride, and to articulate a vision; Individual attention, to followers needs, assigning meaningful projects so as to develop followers; and Intellectual Stimulation, to help followers rethink rational ways to examine a situation, to be creative.

Both Senge (1992) and Bennis (1993) have reiterated the notion, emphasising the need for skills such as visionary focus, creative insight, commitment, sensitivity, caring, empowerment, communication and moral standing

One of the more widely commented upon studies that has been categorised into the trait school was undertaken by Bennis (1984). He undertook a longitudinal study over a period of five years, taking 90 of the most effective leaders from both public and private sectors.

The results pointed towards four important traits, as follows:

- Management of attention – through a compelling idea that mobilises action
- Management of meaning – effective communication to enrol followers personally in the vision
- Management of trust – people rather follow a leader they can count on consistently every time
- Management of self – good leaders know themselves, their strengths & weaknesses, and employ them effectively

Bennis (1998) went on to describe five qualities he saw as essential for successful leadership, as follows:

- Technical Competence – a combination of knowledge, broad experience and an ability to do what one does as well as possible
- People skills – the ability to understand oneself, and to understand and work well with others
- Conceptual skills – the viewpoint and vision to capitalise on opportunities and anticipate future ones
- Judgement – an artful mix of cognitive capabilities and intuition, translating into understanding and steadiness
- Character – a balance of ambition, ability and conscience

Despite the amount of literature produced within the trait school, there has been much criticism of the “born to lead” notion. These have centred around three central issues.

- First, that there appears to be no universal set of traits accepted by all authors, and no prioritisation within the set of characteristics.
- Further, that all personality studies focus totally on the characteristics of the individual in question, never marrying those traits to the context of the situation.
- The criteria of research have never been consistent between the evaluations, with the result that outputs are not transferable or comparable.

In terms of relevance to our research project, if we are seeking to establish a conceptual model of perception of the understanding of leadership within RCT CBC, this school would seem to provide an initial foundation – it gives a list, all be it a very broad list, of a number of constructs relating to abilities, competences or capabilities that a variety of studies have found to be central to leadership. As noted above, the results may not be valid or reliable, but in another sense seem to hold a descriptive perspective that participants in our project may easily relate to, and they describe. Of

particular interest here would be the language used to describe those capabilities perceived as being constituent to leadership in top teams in local government.

#### **6.2.2.2 The Self Development School**

In essence, this represents a counter to the Born to Lead School, with roots in philosophical and moral ideology (Plato and Socrates), based upon a value driven process of self examination and justification as a director of action.

In essence, this represents the counter argument to the “born to lead” school is to be found in the Self Development School, with roots deeply embedded in philosophical and moral ideology.

The Self Development, or Wisdom School was greatly influenced by the works of Socrates, notably the Socratic question “What ought one to do?” Implicit within the movement is the notion of self-examination, of justifying to oneself what one considers to be “good”, or why an individual chooses one course of action over another.

The concept of constant self examination, the articulation of values and the overcoming of obstacles led in turn to the “concept of wisdom, itself an inspiration of finding and moulding pathways through hindrances, combining intellect with humility, rationality and emotion” (Kakabadse, 2000).

In itself, this provided a central challenge to the Trait School. How can you challenge the current ways of doing things if you are unable to ‘think outside the box’ of your current constraints?

The works of Plato are also central to the paradigm. Plato described a “quest for the enlightened leader who can overcome the convolutions of human conduct through the possession of an intellectual vision”.

Plato described a leader's development as one of breaking out of perpetual straight jackets, and an acknowledgement that there is not only "one truth", but that the "one truth" varies according to each leader, who in turn nurtures their own "one truth"

However, debate exists within this school also. The debate can be described as the difference between principal and pragmatism, and later became characterised by a debate between the transformational and transactional

Possibly the most well known author on the pragmatist side is Machiavelli, who held a view of leadership more focused on practical action, exploring how leaders should behave.

Here, the central notion surrounds the welfare, promotion and survival of the state. Issues of morality and justice must come second to the establishment of power in pursuit of these goals, and any means required to defend that position by an individual are therefore justified.

The individual becomes inextricably linked with the needs of the state, and in situations where different interests prevail, the one who succeeds and dominates the pack becomes the leader, gaining superior power.

We can see similarities here between Machiavelli and Plato, the dividing factor being the underlying moral and value structure guiding the actions of the individual – is the approach based on pragmatism promoting power for the good of individual, or for the good of the people. These discussions have been captured in more recent literature, and encapsulated in the following themes.

Becoming a leader is an ongoing journey of self and team development, and as such leaders need to develop themselves through the undertaking of a life-long venture, utilising not only a set of attributes, but also utilising experience.

Leadership is concerned with nurturing and development – about ideas of what motivates people, and how people plan to develop greater ability. It involves challenging old work practices, values and beliefs, so a social understanding is critical

Kakabadse, Kakabadse and Kouzmin (2003) place leadership firmly within the domain of ethics and value, describing effective leadership as “*the pillar of ethical practice*” and is “*inextricably linked to value*”.

*“Only through leadership can the values of a public service be put into action, for example, how to serve customers or clients in particular contexts and balance that with the interests and rights of citizens”.*

Kakabadse & Kakabadse (1999) extend the discussion to describe quality leaders as “*those who have the maturity and capability to invite, receive and handle feedback, and then display the necessary wisdom to identify appropriate pathways forward when direction is obscured*”.

Further, “*Quality Leadership, encompassing maturity and wisdom at the individual level, needs to be incorporated at the team level through a cohesiveness of vision, and unity of direction*”

This provides us with our first insight in our search for any implicit definition of quality or successful leadership.

At a conceptual level, the notions discussed are widely accepted and understood. If there are a set of valued capabilities, how can one argue that development is not possible? However, the texts surrounding the school, by their nature, have a tendency towards the philosophical, and suffer from a lack of methodological questioning and validation as a result.

Relating the development school to our project, there appears to be a natural link between value driven pursuit of a “higher good” together with the related development and improvement of those necessary capabilities and the governance driven leadership of a local authority.

This would place the capability constructs from the trait schools in a specific developmental framework relating to ideological perspectives. The context of

pragmatism relating to top team leadership places the role occupants in a position of having to balance ideological stances with the negotiation of agendas in terms of politician and officer agendas, together with stakeholder agendas, and as such adds a critical dimension to the model, something further explored in the political leadership school discussed later in the literature review.

### **6.2.2.3 The Behavioural School**

This represents a concentration on style of leadership, and interaction with 'followers'. Authors include Likert (1961), and Blake and Mouton (1964).

The theme of the behavioural school of leadership centres on the notion that the attitudes a manager holds about the nature of people will greatly influence their behaviour. For example, attitude behaviour can create "self fulfilling prophecies" – what a manager expects from and how he treats staff influences their performance

The behavioural school concentrates on styles of leadership, e.g. autocratic, democratic, laissez-faire, task orientated, people orientated etc. A classic example of this is Lewin's research on small group behaviour on autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire in the 1930's, which created the concept of an "ideal" style of leadership.

Other studies have since added to this approach, for example, Blake & Mouton (1964) and their concept of a Managerial Grid, who postulated a 'best' style of management and leadership behaviour, namely a style that could be described as "team and participative."

Other authors such as Likert (1961) supported this approach, noting that supervisors that practised 'general supervision' and who were "employee centred" engendered higher levels of morale and productivity from the workforce.

All gave support to an "ideal" or "normative" style of leadership – a style that involved subordinates in goal setting through participative techniques, focusing on both people and task.

The behavioural school noted for the first time that it was not just the characteristics of the leader that mattered, but also their relationship with others in the organisation, and that greater effectiveness could be achieved if the human element was considered in the leadership process. It also hints at the importance of context, but there is a tendency to generalise results, especially given the definition of all models of an ideal style. If context is important how can there be an ideal style to fit all occasions.

Further, given that leadership occurs at all levels within an organisation, the existence of an ideal style is unlikely given such concepts as role and power difference. For example, two different issues facing an individual may present very different leadership challenges and responses. Once again, there is little empirical evidence to substantiate the transferability and generality of such theories.

Despite this, the behavioural school will, in my opinion, add an important dimension to perceptions of leadership in the top team at RCT. The nature of such top teams in local government mean that, although in theory all participants in the team have a direct and equal opportunity to exert influence on direction, pragmatically, there is a wide difference in capabilities, perspective and role of officers and members.

As such, the concepts of leader / follower relationship and role and power difference are useful constructs in terms of the context of operation of the top team.

#### **6.2.2.4 The Contingency Approach**

This postulates that the correct style of leadership is contingent upon a number of factors, including leader / follower traits and relationship; organisational culture and structure; environmental factors; situation (stable or dynamic). Authors include Fiedler (1967) and Tannenbaum & Schmidt (1958), who propose a leadership continuum based upon levels of freedom of employees.



The contingency or situational approach has developed in more recent years alongside the contingent theory of management, and postulates that the correct style of leadership is contingent upon a number of factors:

- The leader / follower relationship
- The followers and leaders traits
- Organisational culture & structure
- Environmental factors
- Stable task vs. dynamic situations

Dependent upon the prevalence and importance placed upon those factors, the leader should adopt a given style of management.

Tannenbaum & Schmidt (1958) suggest the existence of a “leadership continuum” from boss centred to subordinate centred leadership, separated by levels of use of authority by the leader and levels of freedom to act by subordinates.

In their model, the style adopted by the leader would be contingent upon forces in themselves, forces in the subordinates and forces in the situation.

Fiedler (1967) put forward a different contingency theory, noting the critical elements of any leadership situation are as follows:

- Leader – member relations (extent of support)
- Task structure (complexity / ambiguity of task)
- Position power (extent that the organisation gives the leader means to punish or reward)

The leader must look at the favourableness of each situation to choose an appropriate style – those extremely favourable or unfavourable would warrant an autocratic and task centred style; those, which look moderately favourable, should utilise a relationship style

Leaders can improve their effectiveness by choosing situations suitable to their own dominant style

A further model that has become widely utilised is the Hersey-Blanchard Life Cycle (1977), a situational approach dependent upon the maturity of followers, defined by follower's willingness and ability to take on responsibility for project completion, the achievement motivation level, and relevant task knowledge. For example, if followers are 'immature', a high task, low relationship style should be adopted.

The contingency school provided a more practically acceptable set of theories, accepting the notion that a single style of leadership cannot be appropriate in all organisational circumstances, raising the level of transference across context. There is also an acceptance of both capability and behavioural issues, though little acknowledgement of the developmental school of leadership.

Also, there is a generally held notion within all schools of leadership described so far that leadership is embodied within the roles of particular individuals. The particular perspective of the project proposed in this document presents the problem as one involving leadership within a team, rather than just leader / follower relations, and as such, although the importance of context has been recognised, the theory doesn't address the core issues as described.

Such discussions further evolve our model. To date, we have constructed a model that places capabilities within a value driven developmental framework, where role, power and relationship have impact. The notion of the contingency school widens the context debate to culture, environment and situation. Task structure is a useful construct to explore, as there is a distinction between the type of decision made at cabinet itself (i.e. debate and decisions at cabinet are, by constitution, described as strategic in nature), and by a cabinet member acting in a personal capacity at operational level.

### **6.2.2.5 Strategic Leadership School**

Strategic leadership theories are concerned with leadership of organisations, and as Selznick described (1957), consider the evolution of the organisation as a whole, including changes of direction and priority and the capabilities required to achieve those aims. There was a focus not only on the head of the organisation, but also on members of the top team (Cyert & March, 1963). Activities associated with this school of leadership include making strategic decisions, creating and communicating vision, developing key competences and capabilities, developing organisational structures, managing stakeholders, sustaining effective culture, etc. (Boal & Hooijberg, 2001)

In essence, it combines the future-oriented notion of Visionary Leadership, concerned with forward looking risk taking and cohesion, and managerial leadership, the notion of having dreams and undertaking actions to turn the dreams into reality. It is interested in the full scope of activities, including vision, strategic choices and organisational activities.

The school for the first time embeds leadership as a central tenet of the organisation, building upon behavioural, capability, development and contingent schools. It follows the emergence of a strategic approach to management, and places leadership at the heart of that body of work in the necessity of turning plans into actions, thoughts into structures and processes, and achieving required outcomes.

This is a useful addition to the model. The *raison d'être* of the cabinet system is to create “joined up” delivery of services, co-ordinated by a corporately driven top team taking on board the wider perspectives and well being of the organisation. However, my feeling is that the extent to which this is true depends upon the area of the organisation where an individual’s role is located, and their specific background.

### **6.2.2.6 The Political School**

The political school is in essence separated into a number of discrete areas: the formal and informal agenda setting process; exertion of power; the policy process; stakeholder management, etc.

The ability to influence and lead may come at the formal agenda setting stage. However, the right to propose does not necessarily equate to the power to set an agenda. In part, it depends upon constitutional issues – for example, the system may be one of majority rule, or a qualified majority. This may include a constitutional ability to amend.

Informal agenda setting may involve the resolution of focal points through negotiation, collaboration and bargaining, through to the use of direct power, where multiple equilibrium solutions exist as an answer to policy problems. It can involve the balancing of stakeholder needs, or the need to resolve an issue of a political or organisational imperative.

Lukes (1974) recognised three views on power, as follows. Firstly, he saw a one dimensional view with a focus on decision making and overt conflict. Dahl (1958, p203) described this as “*A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something B would not otherwise do*”. This implies that power involves a relationship between political actors, be they individuals, groups or other human aggregates. This is often described as the pluralist approach.

The second dimension has been described as non-decision making, with a focus extending from issues to include potential issues, and covert conflict. Bachrach and Baratz (1963, p632) define this non-decision making as “*the practice of limiting the scope of actual decision making to ‘safe’ issues by manipulating the dominant community, values, myths and political institutions and procedures*”.

The third dimension moves us to the concept of latent power – A exercises power over B when A affects B in a manner contrary to B’s interests. The existence of a consensus does not mean that power is not being exercised. This is the exercise of power to shape peoples preferences so that neither overt nor covert conflict exists.

In terms of the policy process, Kingdon (1984) noted three contiguous streams: the identification of a problem; the proposing of policy alternatives; and political attention to certain agendas. He further noted the existence of a “policy window”, described as the co-existence of the rise of a problem in stakeholder terms, the development of a suitable policy proposal and an acceptable policy climate. The key here is for a policy entrepreneur to lead (propose), lobby and sell the proposals, noting the need for the leader to be noted as an expert with a given network and persistence to create or utilise the window.

The body of work has evolved from the rational comprehensive planning framework of Simon (1945), utilising a highly structured approach to evaluate formally all information to solve problems in a rational manner, through the emergent or disjointed incrementalist school of Lindblom (1959) where one makes decisions based upon the information to hand, to the mixed scanning approach of Dror (1964) to developing public policy. From the administration style of leadership in a political arena, through to the management approach which brought in human elements to the evolution and implementation of strategy.

The debates around the rational against emergent schools have perpetuated for many years, but more recently the public sector challenges for leaders have come to mirror those of the private sector, and similar issues have emerged in political as in strategic leadership terms.

These debates have expanded to a wider viewpoint of political leadership. Tucker (1981) as described in Kakabadse et al (1999: p18) sees politics as leadership where *“politics is considered as the active direction of a political community, and can thus be equated with leadership”*

He defines the political leadership as threefold:

- Diagnostic – describing and defining situations for the group
- Prescriptive – outlining possible courses of action to meet the defined situation
- Mobilising – policy formation and implementation

These concepts are crucial in the specific context of local government leadership, given the policy process as described under the modernisation agenda which places the role of the group and its dynamics as a core element of decision making in local government.

Also, such a context involving politicians within the top team environment would indicate that this is a necessary addition to the model reflecting the perceptions of leadership in RCT CBC. For example, as previously described, constitutionally the agenda of the cabinet is set by the Leader and Deputy Leader of the authority, with the Chief Executive acting as secretary to the cabinet, denoting explicitly a political dimension to agenda setting within the organisation. The concept of plurality is clearly evident as part of the political management process of balancing stakeholders.

From this body of work, we derive a range of issues involving both formal and informal processes. Whilst there appears to be a degree of understanding surrounding these issues, there is less clarity and research surrounding the political drivers or those processes that allow political activity and thinking to be integrated into the reality of a local government world.

#### **6.2.2.7 Discretionary School**

One of the seminal authors focusing on discretion was Elliot Jaques (1951), who described executive work as being a combination of the prescribed (that part of the role that requires the occupant of that role to undertake pre-set tasks) and the discretionary (choices determined by the role incumbent in providing structure, priority etc). As a direct result, the number of discretionary roles in an organisation determines the number of visions and ways of operating that can shape an organisation.

Senior management's time was viewed as a combination of the discretionary, or leadership, functions and the prescriptive or managerial functions. Kakabadse and Kakabadse (1999) later redefined these as follows:

- Prescribed – more structured tasks and implementation
- Discretionary – setting agendas, vision and the establishment and maintenance of agendas

The work of Jaques and Kakabadse and Kakabadse and the discretionary concept adds an explicit element to our model, as it provides a mechanism for exploring the roles and choices of members of the top team, both member and officer. For example, if a member has a great discretionary element to their role, the choices they make as to how they allocate capacity in time terms provides an implicit insight into the political agenda setting process, and leadership capability requirements.

#### **6.2.2.8 Transactional & Transformational Leadership**

The relevance and current importance of each of these schools or approaches to leadership has varied over time, and only when placed in the context of the prevailing socio-economic climate can we see how the pattern has emerged.

As noted in Kakabadse and Kakabadse, 1999, there were a number of factors that can be seen to have driven the leadership agenda, as follows:

- Post WW2, there was a period of growth and prosperity – essentially a demand driven economy where demand exceeded supply
- By the 1970's, the cycle had turned, and the market became characterised by an excess of supply over demand. This led to a leadership revolution, where the drive became one of differentiating one organisation from its competition, an emphasis on quality of goods and services and simultaneously confronting spiralling wages

- The issue of sustainability became linked to customer care, personal service, downsizing, change management and concepts of choice and quality. However, when most organisations performed the shift, the degree of differentiation became blurred, and *survival anxiety* replaced sustainability
- Gaining competitive differentiation as a total corporation became the challenge, with consideration of the needs of consumers has become intertwined with the consideration of shareholders, with an emphasis on total corporate capability (Kakabadse & Kakabadse, 1999)

This has been reflected in a number of “new age” leadership theories which in simplistic terms reflect the accumulation of the above approaches into reflections on leadership that are dominated by themes of empowerment, setting the tone, defining purpose, vision and culture. The notion of transformation, and its distinction between transactional activities, has come to the fore, (Kakabadse and Kakabadse, 1999), though it is firmly placed as an extension to the discretionary school.

Transformational Leadership involves a fundamental shift from the status quo through the provision of a new vision of the future, followed by the motivation of others to help make that future vision a reality.

Leaders are also required to perform a range of day to day operational duties, transactional activities, to ensure the continued survival of the organisation, including such things as budgets, monitoring, project management etc.

Nicholls (1998) referred to similar concepts, though re-terming transformational leadership as macro-leadership, and transactional leadership as micro-leadership. Nicholls then proceeds to define meta-leadership as the achievement of influence through visioning based upon conviction and empathy with others, followed by articulation.

The question for the leader is deciding which approach to adopt, with the selection being dependent upon their reading of the context. The results from the Cranfield Executive Competence studies demonstrate that it is this balance between



transforming and transacting, between leading and managing that is critical in organisational survival.

The Cranfield Top Executive Competence Studies were initiated upon concerns that the changed economic conditions and emergence of new institutional forms had challenged practices of already existing approaches to leadership.

The argument development as per Kakabadse et al, 1996 is as follows:

A Senior Manager's job is usually split between leadership elements (discretionary) and management elements (prescriptive), with discretionary elements predominating.

Individual senior managers will need to make choices between unclear alternatives, so the nurturing of key interfaces with influential internal and external stakeholders in order to negotiate commitment becomes essential.

Those choices and the extent of commitment highlights the importance of stakeholders in the decision making processes of the organisation, together with the importance of the capabilities of senior managers to effectively respond to such challenges

Different senior managers in a team will have different views as to the shape, size and direction, qualities of the organisation, etc – this in turn poses the fundamental question of what, how and when to lead – to what extent do senior managers share their views and concerns with each other (Lukes, 1974 ; Kakabadse & Parker, 1981)

Effective dialogue and the cohesion of the top team therefore become vital in the continued performance and survival of the organisation.

The paradox of leadership becomes one of marrying corporate philosophy with corporate activity, of strategy with operational demands. From a leadership perspective, the critical theme becomes that of creating a vision that is shared by the top team, and promoted by each manager through his or her activities.

The studies have investigated predominantly through questionnaire the views of Top Tier Civil Servants, leaders in the private sector and senior managers in the NHS across an international spectrum of countries (Kakabadse et al, 1996). They have explored the importance of cohesion of the top team in terms of shared understanding of vision, ability to discuss sensitive issues, and the corresponding impact of the top team to the next levels in the organisation.

The results are clear. That cohesion of vision and action is critical, established only through an environment allowing quality dialogue between all members of the top team, together with internal and external stakeholders.

The body of theory also embodies the developmental perspective on leadership, namely that an integral part of leadership is the continual development of a set of capabilities and responses to varied circumstances and people (Kakabadse & Kakabadse, 1998: p38).

*“Leadership is defined as a person’s capability and commitment to perform leadership tasks, where capability is conceptualised as a function of knowledge and/or skills”*

*“In applying a capability model, there is a necessity to distinguish between behavioural skills, knowledge and personal characteristics or traits” ... “distinguishing personal capabilities from personal characteristics”.*

We have noted earlier the necessity to include role as a construct within our model. The debate surrounding discretion / prescription and transactional / transformational leadership here evolves that earlier construct. In part, this helps explain a significant difference between the perspectives and agendas of officers and politicians, as the defined role of members relates specifically to work that is discretionary and transformational nature, whereas for officers, there is a balance of transactional and transformational nature.

Further, the work surrounding capabilities and competences adds a critical dimension to our model in terms of leadership requirements. Accepting that leaders have a range

of capabilities, this must form part of any framework that emerges, noting the separation of character and capabilities.

### **6.2.2.9 Successful Leadership**

At the outset of defining the research question, we noted the implicit point of describing, but not defining, successful leadership – if we seek to explore those capabilities valued within the context of the modernising agenda of local government within discretionary and developmental framework, implicitly we are seeking those which reflect “good”, “quality” or “successful” leadership.

Kakabadse and Kakabadse (1999) described quality leaders as those with the maturity and capability to receive feedback, whilst also possessing the wisdom to see a way forward when that direction may be unclear. Quality leadership, therefore, becomes the incorporation of those traits of the individuals concerned at a team level via cohesiveness and shared ownership of vision.

Giacchino and Kakabadse (2003: p95) explored a range of factors that would influence the *“successful implementation of major policy decisions, and the manner in which these factors affected success”*, where success was defined as *“a policy implementation initiative in which the strategic action adopted by the administration of government was considered to have delivered the intended policy decision, and achieved the intended outcomes, i.e. it delivered on the terms of reference and the expected functionality of the stakeholders”*.

Tucker (1981) described success factors as the elements of the work or management process that can be controlled by the project manager or project management team to increase the chance of achieving successful outcomes

The outcome of the research of Giacchino and Kakabadse (2003) was to provide a range of factors that would influence success, as follows:

- Leadership
- Trust

- Role delineation – Perry (1985) noted that “*effective strategic management is marred if (role) ambiguity exists*”
- Commitment and ownership, together with collective responsibility at multiple levels
- Co-operation of involved parties
- Capacity in terms of skills and abilities to deliver
- Effective strategy
- Positive attitude
- Location of political responsibility – greater possibility of success if policy carries high profile
- Management style
- Stakeholder involvement
- Use of networks
- Values and beliefs

This research provides further insight to the political leadership school, placing successful implementation of a policy balancing both stakeholder outcomes and political agendas, and provides a useful working description of “successful” leadership, in our case study more usefully of policy leadership.

#### **6.2.2.10 Upper Echelon Theory**

This concept of management of the team came to the fore in a seminal paper by Hambrick & Mason (1984), where the Upper Echelon perspective was described as the study of top executives, and their effects on organisational strategy and performance.

The work was grounded in Simon’s (1957) concept that a top executive’s work is based within limits of bounded rationality, limited search, information overload and coalitional dynamics. It represents a backlash against the population ecology model of an organisation being swept along within the sea of its environment, predicated on the belief that a manager does have an impact, and that the economic model of leadership lacks reference to the human element.

Hambrick and Mason (1984) outlined three main points:

- The organisation becomes (partly) a reflection of its top managers, who act on the basis an incomplete, filtered and personally biased understanding of the organisation. These top managers act based upon understood experiences, motives, etc.
- The characteristics of the Top Management Team (TMT) matter more than those of just the most senior executive. To understand organisational outcomes, there is a need to look at the whole TMT.
- Demographic Characteristics (tenure, functional background, education, etc.) can be used as partial indicators for a range of psychological properties. Organisational outcomes are reflections of the values and cognitive bases of the most powerful actors in the organisation, as noted in Hambrick and Cho (1996).

These concepts have been echoed in the works of Katzenbach (1997) and Yukl (1998) in their discussions on shared leadership. Yukl (as noted in Kakabadse and Kakabadse (1998, p20 – 23) describes shared leadership as an influence exerted over other people in a group or organisation. Katzenbach (1997) argued that TMT's achieve real performance when they learn to shift the leader role back and forth depending on needs and demands.

Thus there was a separation of vertical (more hierarchical) leadership and shared leadership (of the team or group). Pearce (1999) described leadership behaviour as something exhibited by teams in aggregate, involving greater collaboration, co-operation and innovation (Manz and Sims, 1993).

The importance of the leadership of the team has since been expanded to encapsulate the concept of membership of multiple teams, or cadre. As such, the concept of leader as an individual has shifted to that of whole cadre (Kakabadse, 2000).

Interestingly, the results across the different contexts, from public and private sector, demonstrated clearly that the challenges facing leaders in each of the arenas were essentially the same, with the same critical factors of shared vision and quality dialogue.

The upper-echelon / top team theories appear to provide the closest resemblance to the problem as defined in this project. It examines the challenges facing modern complex organisations utilising a top team approach combined with the notion of shared leadership, and seeks to provide a framework of analysis for the capabilities that will best overcome those challenges. This mirrors the situation of a new Cabinet in local government in Wales who are faced with a set of as yet undefined challenges, where the need is to set a programme to develop those capabilities that will most help in overcoming those challenges.

### **6.2.3 Literature Summary**

The previous sections demonstrate the wealth of literature available on the subject of leadership, and it is by no means considered to be exhaustive. However, the separation of the literature into broad schools of leadership has provided a useful starting point for the development of a framework for research, as follows.

## 6.3 A Framework for Research

### 6.3.1 Establishing a Framework

To develop such a framework, we need to identify those constructs and concepts that emerge from literature. These are shown in Table 4 - Concepts Derived from Literature.

**Table 4 - Concepts Derived from Literature**

<i>Leadership School</i>	<i>Construct / Concept</i>	<i>Authors</i>
<b>Trait Theory</b>	Character	Stodgill ; Ghiselli ; Fiedler ; Bass ; Bennis ; Senge
<b>Developmental</b>	Values& ethics ; Competences	Plato ; Socrates ; Machiavelli ; Kakabadse, Kakabadse & Kouzmin
<b>Behavioural</b>	Relationship	Likert ; Blake & Mouton
<b>Contingency</b>	Context	Fiedler ; Tannenbaum & Schmidt; Hersey & Blanchard
<b>Strategic</b>	Corporate View	Rowe ; Selznick ; Cyert & March ; Boal & Hooijberg
<b>Political</b>	Power ; Agendas ; Processes ; Implementation	Luke ; Dahl ; Bacharach & Baratz ; Kingdon ; Simon ; Lindblom ; Tucker
<b>Discretionary</b>	Role	Jaques ; Kakabadse & Kakabadse
<b>Top Team Theory</b>	Transactional & Transformational leadership; Capabilities; Vision ; Cohesion ; Dialogue	Kakabadse & Kakabadse ; Nicholls ; Parker ; Giacchino ; Myers
<b>Upper Echelon</b>	Role ; Background	Hambrick & Mason ; Katzenbach ; Yukl ; Pearce ; Manz & Sims

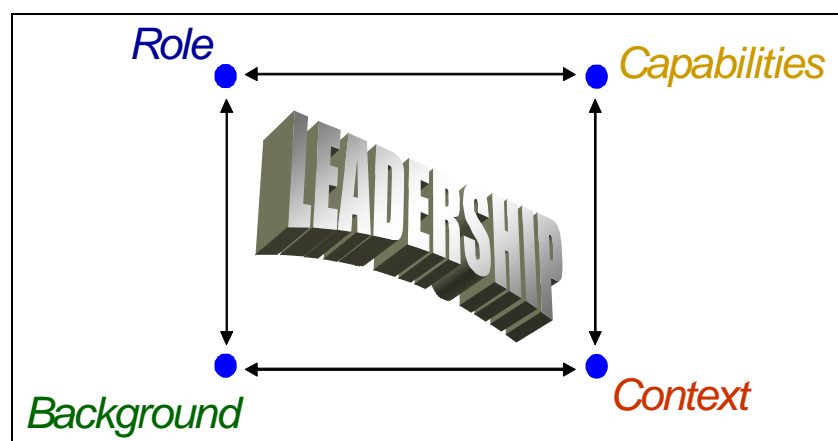
From this, we need to establish linkage between constructs and concepts so that a framework may emerge from which we can organise coding for the research. My conceptualisation is as follows:

My argument is as follows. That the leadership can be understood in terms of a repertoire of attributes, skills, capabilities and competences, some dependent upon character, others developed and learned, that are mobilised dependent upon role and situational context.

As such, the basis for the framework involves four top level constructs, namely background, capabilities, role and context (Figure 1).

**Figure 1 Conceptual Leadership Framework**

Source: Compiled by the author



The theories most closely aligned to this, and therefore guiding our conceptual framework, are Top Team theory and Upper Echelon Theory.

However, from the table above, we can see a range of other concepts, which we could expect to emerge from any discussion surrounding the understanding of literature. These, then, provide us with a notional coding from the literature in terms of our research framework.

It is my intention to structure the research around an exploration of the perceived understanding of leadership in RCT CBC in terms of these constructs and concepts, and to test the relevance of those constructs in theoretical, pragmatic and language terms.



### 6.3.2 Research Question

For the first project of the DBA, my intention is to undertake a pilot study exploring the meaning of leadership and perceived leadership requirements in the top team of RCT CBC in the set context of change under the Modernisation Agenda.

As the Top Team consists of both Council Members and Officers (namely the staff that directly support the Cabinet) the research will seek to explore and gain insight into the shared understanding of leadership in Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC, and take the opportunity of gaining a richer understanding of the perceived context in which the Cabinet operates.

Hence, Project 1 explores the shared understanding of the meaning of leadership and leadership requirements in ‘top teams’ consisting of politicians and council officers in Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council” (RCTCBC).

Therefore the research question can be framed as:

***“How RCT CBC's Top Team members experience and perceive their leadership challenges and requirements?”***

In particular, the project will explore the following –

- What are the described leadership challenges facing the “Top Team”, taken to be the Cabinet together with Servicing Officers, in Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council?
- What are the key competences and capabilities in leadership terms perceived by the Top Team that are required to meet those leadership challenges?

### 6.3.3 Chapter Summary

As stated, the literature surrounding leadership is extensive indeed. However, categorising literature into a number of schools has allowed the construction of a

framework based around my initial perceptions of the research purpose, and knowledge of the context of research, from which we have derived a distinct research question.

Further, we have seen in literature two specific theories, Top Team Theory and Upper Echelon Theory, which would lend direct comparison to the context of the Cabinet at RCT CBC, whilst the concepts from other schools, such as traits, contingency and behavioural schools, each add further dimensions to the model.

Having derived an understanding of the issue in theoretical terms from the literature, explored these from a pragmatic perspective, and derived our initial framework and research questions, the next step is to derive a framework for analysis and research.

## **6.4 Research Methodology**

### **6.4.1 Philosophical Approach**

The philosophical approach adopted must be derived from the described structure of reality. This creates the following argument;

- Reality is socially constructed, multiple and subjective
- Research is carried out in a value-laden environment and by necessity with through the involvement of the researcher

This leads us to look at the pillars of research, namely ontology, epistemology and methodology.

From an ontological perspective, the worldview is one of subjectivity and social construction, i.e. the world exists not only in tangible format, but also through the interpretation of those who inhabit that world. This leads us to a constructivist position, where reality is a product of the meanings given to it by persons, community and society.

This paradigm evolved in the latter twentieth century as a response to positivism, described in work by Berger and Luckman (1966) and Shotter (1993) based on the premise that reality is neither objective nor exterior, focusing on the manner in which people come to an understanding of their surroundings and situation through the sharing of experience via common language .

Habermas (1970) described this, and other similar approaches, as interpretive models. Hence, the aim of our research is to *“appreciate the different constructions and meanings that people place upon their experience. The focus should be on what people, individually and collectively, are thinking and feeling”* (Easterby Smith, Thorpe and Lowe, 2002, p30)

Epistemology seeks to address how data, information and knowledge can be derived from that social reality. The research in this instance is predicated on the involvement and interaction of the researcher in the process in order to gain a rich understanding of the issue of leadership, i.e. the researcher is internal to the subject, though without any direct action on the part of the researcher which will impact on outcomes. The focus of research is one of deriving meaning and an understanding of the phenomena in question. The notion of common positional of subjects, demonstrating an Intersubjective level of 'truth' adds weight to the interpretative approach, and an inductive mode of inquiry.

#### **6.4.2 Research Design & Approach**

Adopting a view that holds that reality is socially constructed (i.e. a constructivist ontology) and is highly subjective in its nature, embraces an interpretative epistemology and a qualitative enquiry approach to this inquiry.

The approach to the inquiry design follows the inductive logic based on learning drawn from Creswell (2003), Mukherji, and Hurtado (2001) and Prasad and Prasad's (2002) work on qualitative methods. An interpretative research philosophy underpins this study and advocates the recognition of validity through the resonance found by participants in the outcomes of the research process. Under this system of beliefs, science is perceived as subjective and therefore allows alternative models of reality (Prasad and Prasad, 2002). The reality presented in this study is one that is expressed by study participants (i.e. their perception of clear context and their frame of reference).

The suggestion is for a two-phase approach in research design, to be carried out over Projects I, II and III.

Looking firstly at Project I, this is in essence an exploratory pilot study, entailing qualitative research involving two in-depth interviews with individuals from the 'Top Team' of RCT CBC, introductory interviews, followed by ten in depth interviews of an equal number of officers and politicians.

Van Maanen (1983: p9) describes qualitative techniques as *“an array of interpretive techniques which seek to describe, decode, translate and otherwise come to terms with the meaning, not the frequency, of certain more or less naturally occurring phenomena in the natural world”*

Burgess (1982: p107) describes interviewing as *“the opportunity for the researcher to probe deeply to uncover new clues, open up new dimensions of a problem and to secure vivid, accurate inclusive accounts that are based on personal experience”*

### **6.4.3 Data Collection**

The study involved the collection of qualitative data by means of face-to-face interviews. In following the work of Seidman (1998) and Creswell (2003), several arguments are made for this method.

Firstly, qualitative research is flexible, allowing the researcher to modify the research questions, as more information on the subject becomes available. Such flexibility seemed critical, as the literary landscape of leadership within the mix of elected and non-elected officials provided no close example of former studies that could help shape the agenda of this study.

Secondly, the research set out to explore complex perception patterns, and thus the data collection strategy had to afford the researcher humanistic interaction with the actors. Also, to obtain the level of detail that this study seeking requires insider knowledge of the environment.

A quantitative strategy could not explore these nuances of perceptions required. In line with Ford and Wood (1992) the interviews took place in the participant's organisation.

Here, I envisage undertaking two 'introductory' interviews to explore in broad terms the perceived concepts of relevance, and language used to describe those concepts.

This is necessary to explore the proposed protocol in readiness for the in-depth interviews, which will be adjusted dependent upon discussions at this stage.

Following this, I would undertake ten further in-depth interviews, consisting initially of five Cabinet Members (politicians) and five officers from the senior management team, utilising both a prescribed protocol, together with a dialogue involving both open and closed questions. The number of interviews may increase in quantity dependent upon theoretical saturation.

#### **6.4.3.1 Choice of Respondents**

For Project 1, the respondents as framed by the research question and chosen methodology must be members of the 'top team', the Cabinet (both officer and politicians) in Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council.

For the research I wish to undertake, it is only these respondents who can provide the information required to fulfil the purpose of the study in terms of richness of understanding of the issues and their level of participation in the process of change.

The issues being explored relate directly to the participants perceptions of reality, and their individual specific roles.

Language is also thought to be critical. The concepts so far discussed have a variety of possible interpretations, and it is essential that all participants have a shared understanding of definitions. My role as Deputy Leader of a local authority, and Vice Chair of the Cabinet, allows me to more effectively interpret and translate the language of those concepts into a terminology that can be more readily understood by the communities in question.

Also, I will be able to more closely appreciate the value structure and meaning as expressed by those involved, without losing texture of response, hence the research role can be described as that of participant observer. The usage of multiple respondents will reduce the impact of individual bias. It must be noted, however, that my involvement in the cabinet will also prove limiting to the extent that respondents

may colour their responses in terms of answers they think I may wish to hear, and further that my interpretation of those responses may be similarly biased.

The level of analysis can be described as membership of the Cabinet, and the unit of analysis is the individual.

#### **6.4.3.2 Researcher position within the research**

The level of independence achievable will increase for each consecutive Project of the Research Agenda. Project I is based within the organisation in which I am a member of the Top Team. The Top Team, or Cabinet, consists of ten politicians and five senior officers (The Chief Executive together with four Group Directors), together with ad hoc support of a further twelve directors.

As such, it is possible to explore the perceptions of a range of individuals other than myself. However, it must be noted that as researcher, I will be well known to all participants involved, and have contributed to the socially constructed reality. Hence the position for the research would be that of involved enquirer within a pilot study mode of research. This fits within the sub-domain of an interpretative perspective, with the researcher having an obvious involvement in the social construction of the participant's reality. As the purpose is to gain understanding rather than seek explanation or causality, involvement at this level is deemed acceptable, though we must acknowledge the possible limits noted above.

#### **6.4.3.3 Proposed Protocol**

Leading from the constructs and concepts identified within the literature, a framework for research evolved, as described in section 2.4. From this, we derive a protocol for investigation and questioning, mirroring the framework previously described.

The protocol is shown at Appendix 2

#### **6.4.4 Research Methods for Data Analysis**

This phase of the methodology would be based around two processes. Firstly, a process based around “meaning condensation” (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Lee, 1999), the extraction of key themes from the interview text, using a combination of pre-codes based around the themes noted from the literature, and a number of emergent codes to incorporate any new themes that emerge from the interviews.

The data will then be positioned in terms of the framework derived from literature to establish the level of resemblance between the perceptions of the participants involved in the study and the concepts described in literature.

There will be no attempt to “rank” responses in terms of priorities, or perform any type of statistical analysis. Our aim is to create from descriptions obtained in responses a rich picture of leadership based on the perceptions of the top team.

The qualitative analysis software, QSR NVIVO 1.3 has been used for the management of the qualitative data and to facilitate the exploration of relationships between the categories.

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#### **6.4.5 Summary**

The project has now moved from a position of building a theoretical framework based around literature into a stage where we have established a particular ethical and philosophical positioning, together with suitable methodology, to undertake research that will fulfil the outlined purpose of research.

From here, having designed a protocol and methodology, the next step is to undertake the fieldwork itself. From a personal perspective, I must admit that this is the first foray into such work, and my initial notion of undertaking interview work has more value than simply testing the model derived from literature!



## **6.5 Findings**

### **6.5.1 Introduction**

The interviews themselves were conducted over a four week period during the budget review period, linked to work surrounding the Wales Programme for Improvement discussions, i.e. linking expenditure specifically to performance and issues of delivery and capacity.

The process involved two stages, as previously described, of two initial interviews and ten main interviews. In terms of the analysis, I will present the results categorised by the nodes / constructs that constituted the initial model.

### **6.5.2 Initial Interviews - Analysis & Impact**

Two initial discussions were undertaken to explore the relevance of the protocol to members who held a position within the formally described Top Team, namely one cabinet member and a senior officer. Both discussions followed similar paths, as described below, which gave rise to an amended protocol.

#### **6.5.2.1 Background**

The notion of background was well understood, and in both cases elicited a full and detailed response from the interviewees. Both respondents, without probing, provided not only a breakdown of role in terms historical information, but also their functional roles and learning from their backgrounds. Information covered both work experience, training and formal education.

#### **6.5.2.2 Context**

Whilst the interviewees proved able to describe their organisational context and challenges with relative ease, further probing was necessary to elicit perceptions

surrounding their context and challenges in terms of the Top Team, and the participants as individuals. This issue was then reflected in a revised protocol.

### **6.5.2.3 Capabilities**

Firstly, it was apparent that the interviewees could provide an extensive list of desirable attributes or skills. However, any distinctions between capabilities, traits and competences were not concurrent with literature. It was also apparent from the discussion that there was little usage or understanding of the terms transactional or transformational leadership. However, exploring the nature of challenges facing both the individual and Top Team proved a useful mechanism for eliciting skills and capabilities that were perceived to be useful in overcoming challenges.

### **6.5.2.4 Role**

Interviewees proved able to describe their role in terms of level, discretion, prescribed activities and functional balance without difficulty. Issues were concerned matters of language and perception differences as to the extent members should be involved in operational activities.

## **6.5.3 Lessons from the Initial Interviews**

The initial interviews provided useful insight into not only the subject area in question, as discussed above, but also the protocol, process and language necessary for the main interviews.

It became apparent from the initial interviews that the language used in literature varied from that of the interviewees in question, especially the cabinet member, who although proved very able to communicate verbally, was not aware of a number of the terms used in more academic, or even professional circles.

Also, both respondents demonstrated a willingness to extend responses from the question at hand into other areas of discussion, whether related to the answer or not, and natural exploration led a path through the protocol that was different in both cases. It did, however, allow a degree of richness surrounding issues that was not anticipated, and welcome, especially in the area of context, where the participants took the opportunity to “download” issues and feelings quite readily. Thus, it was deemed useful to build a degree of flexibility desirably built in to the main interview process.

## **6.5.4 Main Interviews - Broad Findings**

### **6.5.4.1 Background**

This node reflects the concepts underlying the work of Hambrick and Mason (1984) in their Upper Echelon Theory, which specifically note the importance of Demographic Characteristics such as tenure, functional background and education.

Analysis provided the background node with three child nodes, namely work experience, training and cultural aspects, taken in turn below. The nodes follow closely the descriptions and notions of the literature.

### **6.5.4.2 Work Experience**

Work experience of one form or another was referenced by both politicians and officers alike when describing historical aspects of their life that they perceived had impact or relevance to their current role. Through the language of participants, this has been further subdivided into a number of siblings, as shown below in

**Table 5 – Work Experience Coding and Quotations**

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Example of Quotation</b>
<b>Managerial</b>	<p><i>“More and more as managerial level, implementing policies and developing policies” (PM3 : P7)</i></p> <p><i>“Senior Management Experience” (OM2 : P5)</i></p>
<b>Operational</b>	<p><i>“moving then into education and administration” (OM1 : P18)</i></p> <p><i>“supervisory” (PM4 : P15)</i></p>
<b>Public Sector</b>	<p><i>“over 30 years now with what was the Welsh Office, now the National Assembly, so its all been public sector work” (PM5 : P8)</i></p> <p><i>“working with South Glamorgan County Council” (PM5 : P8)</i></p> <p><i>“part time youth and community worker” (PM5 : P8)</i></p> <p><i>“been a minority party councillor for 26 years” (PM1 : P14)</i></p> <p><i>“my actual experience then has been entirely within the public sector within university sector, health sector, within the housing sector” (OM5 : P31)</i></p>
<b>General</b>	<p><i>“I’ve definitely got a post grad from the university of life” (PM1 : P12)</i></p> <p><i>“family business, a butchers shop” (PM1 : P12)</i></p> <p><i>“worked in different contexts” (OM3 : P11)</i></p> <p><i>“I spent the first 15 years of my life in the forces” (OM5 : P19)</i></p>

In terms of the managerial coding, although reference was made to this more by officer than politician, senior level management experience was regularly cited when describing background

Operational level work experience was referenced by member and officer alike, although more on equal levels between both parties.

There was regular feedback from both member and officer surrounding Public Sector work experience – all participants in the interview process described at least some experience within the public sector as part of their background.

Further, a number of references were made by both members and officers that demonstrated a wide range of experiences and different contexts of working, though the variety was more notable with the politicians.

### 6.5.4.3 Training

The description surrounding the training construct provided three child nodes, namely “on the job”, professional and academic, as could have been anticipated. Once again, examples are provided below in Table 6.

**Table 6 Training Coding and Quotations**

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Example of Quotation</b>
<b>Academic</b>	<p><i>“a teaching qualification, I have Batchelor of Arts, Masters in Science and Strategic Management, I got a 1st for my Advanced Diploma in Education in the University of London and a Distinction for my MSc in Treforest.” (OM3 : P22)</i></p> <p><i>“I undertook a Masters Degree in Community Care” (OM5 : P27)</i></p> <p><i>“post graduate work” (OM1 : P18)</i></p> <p><i>“Henley Management College over a period of 3 years” (OM4 : P12)</i></p>
<b>On the Job</b>	<p><i>“focussed on developing my management and leadership skills consciously” (OM1 : P21)</i></p>
<b>Professional</b>	<p><i>“Well, I was professionally trained, this was how I began” (OM4 : P12)</i></p> <p><i>“into Accountancy at the tender age of 21, as a Trainee Accountant for the former Cynon Valley Borough Council.” (OM2 : P5)</i></p> <p><i>“CIPFA qualification” (OM2 : P5)</i></p>

In terms of academic training, a five out of ten of the interviewees had undertaken some form of university education, at least to degree level. For the officers, four out of five were educated to Masters Degree level. On the member side, one of the cabinet members had been educated to degree level.

Strangely, only two direct references were made to on the job training, despite the fact that in my experience, if you discuss training with individuals in the local government arena, I would expect the normal response to be stronger in terms of on the job training than anything else.

Reference was also made to professional training, though this was more extensively described as part of their background by officer than member, and more related to those with technical roles than strategic roles, for example the Group Director with financial responsibility had completed the CIPFA qualification. Interestingly, the Chief Executive made no reference to professional qualifications, though was educated to Masters Level in History.

#### **6.5.4.4 Cultural Exposure**

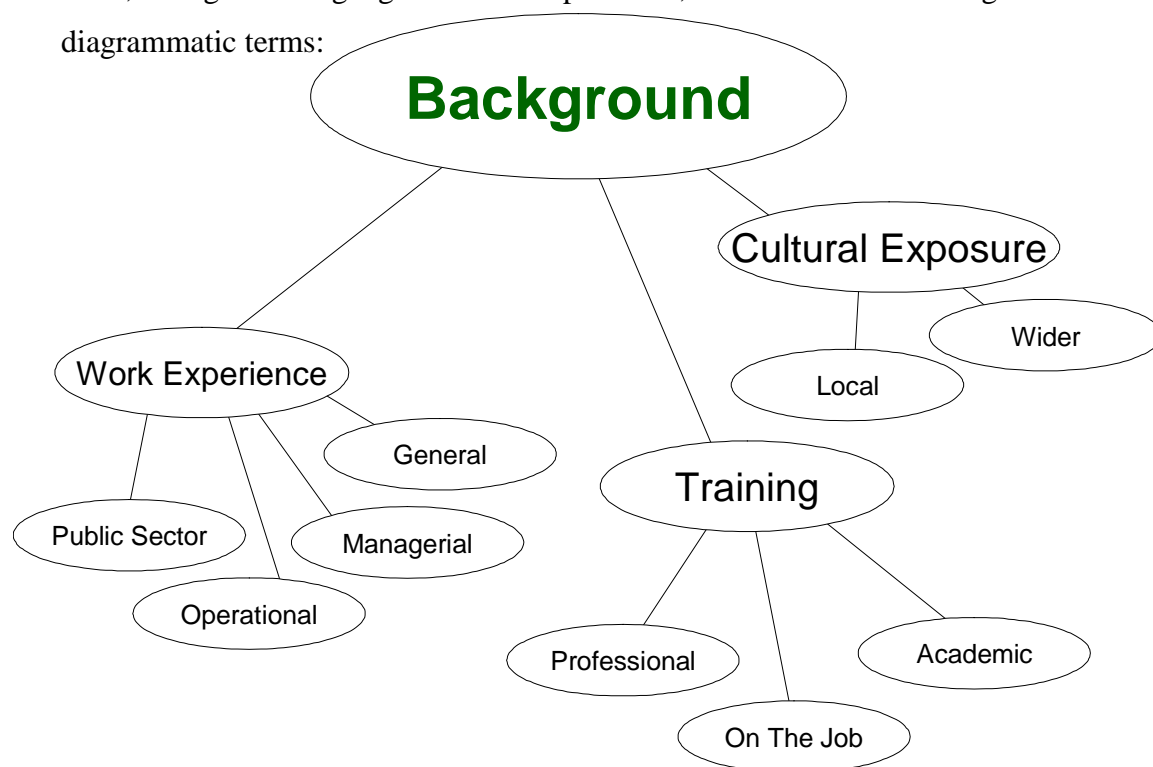
Interestingly, even though the notion of cultural background and exposure was not explicitly explored, the issue was raised in two formats, that of local culture, and also in terms of broader cultural experiences, as shown in:

The description of local cultural exposure refers to an affinity or family history connected directly with they are, whereas the notion of wider cultural exposure described experience of other cultures and nations which were deemed to provide a broader understanding. Significantly, such references came almost exclusively from the officer cadre in terms of being perceived by them as being of relevance.

**Table 7 – Cultural Exposure Coding & Quotations**

Construct	Example of Quotation
<b>Local</b>	<i>“one of 4 children and my father was a miner” (OM3 : P22)</i>
	<i>“raised in South Wales” (OM1 : P13)</i>
	<i>“I can relate to local people in the way they think and what bothers them” (OM1 : P13)</i>
<b>Wider</b>	<i>“some experience of working with young people who were living in a deprived community in the Far East” (OM5 : P21)</i>
	<i>“some time spent abroad in the United States” (OM1 : P18)</i>
	<i>“different set of experiences to a lot of local people” (OM1 : P19)</i>

Thus, using the language of the respondents, we see the following structure in diagrammatic terms:



Source: Compiled by the author

**Figure 2 – Background – Emergent Themes**

The model adds contextual “flesh to the bones”, adding definition framed within respondents own language to the fields of Work Experience, Training and Cultural Exposure. As noted in the text in the accompanying sections above, the descriptions follow a degree of shared understanding, and the concepts are widely accepted.

### **6.5.5 Role**

The concept and import of role relates to the work of Jaques (1951) in terms of her work around prescribed and discretionary activities, Kakabadse & Kakabadse (1999) in terms of transactional and transformational leadership, and Hambrick & Mason (1984) and their focus on role in Upper Echelon Theory.

Both sets of concepts were raised voluntarily during a number of the interviews, although the notion of working at a strategic or operational level were more readily utilised in the local authority language to describe transactional and transformational skills.

#### **6.5.5.1 Functional Level**

Using the language and structure of understanding of the respondents, in terms of functional level, three basic child nodes emerged. I would interpret these as representing the terms of transactional leadership (operational & bureaucratic) and transformational leadership (strategic).

Work at the Operational level was reported on seventeen separate occasions. The strategic element of the participant’s role was universally recognised, with equal frequency of citation as operational activity. Further distinction in functional level was also made in reference to time spent undertaking bureaucratic activity, as evidenced in the following quotations. These are highlighted through quotation in Table 8, as follows.



**Table 8 Functional Level Coding and Quotations**

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Example of Quotation</b>
<b>Operational</b>	<p><i>“Sometimes operational because really I’m dealing with the issues” (PM4 : P37)</i></p> <p><i>“issues for the council that are of a day to day basis though I know the role isn’t supposed to be operational” (PM1 : P35)</i></p> <p><i>“getting involved in the operational side as well keeps you in touch with reality” (PM3 : P26)</i></p> <p><i>“responsibility in respect of service delivery as well”. (OM3 : P31)</i></p>
<b>Strategic</b>	<p><i>“a good Chief Exec. needs to remain as strategic as possible and fight the temptation to get drawn down into the detail” (OM1 : P34)</i></p> <p><i>“right on the boundary of the organisation, looking outward to the external environment trying to anticipate the opportunities and threats of the organisation, looking forward more than most people” (OM1 : P28)</i></p> <p><i>“a lot of what we do is managing the strategy” (OM5 : P53)</i></p>
<b>Professional</b>	<p><i>“trying to sort out the bureaucratic nonsense” (PM2 : P27)</i></p> <p><i>“bureaucratic to the extent that there’s stuff we all have to do as part of local authority life, executive decisions and the like.” (PM1 : P37)</i></p> <p><i>“a bureaucratic element you simply cannot get away from”. (OM1 : P34)</i></p>

### **6.5.5.2 Discretion**

The concept of discretion within role is raised on several occasions, although more from a member than officer perspective, re-enforcing the applicability of the work of Jaques (1951), as evidenced in Table 9.

**Table 9 Discretion Quotation and Coding**

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Example of Quotation</b>
<b>Discretion</b>	<p><i>“so many committees, although I do go to a lot now, but mainly of my own choosing” (PM2 : P54)</i></p> <p><i>“I suppose I’ve got a lot of freedom to decide perhaps what I should focus on and what I shouldn’t” (PM5 : P15)</i></p> <p><i>“You’ve got to take that opportunity to make a change and I think that’s why I’d be more concerned about the transformational side of things.” (PM5 : P18)</i></p> <p><i>“agreeing the role” (PM3 : P117)</i></p> <p><i>“Members aren't really democratically elected for their role” (OM4 : P93)</i></p>

The final quotation above raises the critical issue that members are actually elected to represent a ward, not to occupy a specific corporate role, and will be discussed fully in the following chapter relating to discussion of results.

### **6.5.5.3 Role Multiplicity**

Aside from functional level, all participants also refer to their occupation of multiple roles – in-fact, there are over thirty references to such a phenomenon. For example, members occupy a local or ward role, a cabinet portfolio, a corporate or strategic function, together with seats on external partnerships and other organisations. Similarly, officers also describe multiple role occupation in a similar manner. Examples of responses are detailed below in Table 10.

**Table 10 Role Multiplicity Quotation and Coding**

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Example of Quotation</b>
<b>Role Multiplicity</b>	<p><i>“the responsibilities of your Cabinet post are full time, but on top of that you’ve got your constituency work” (PM4 : P108)</i></p> <p><i>“I also have to meet outside groups and businesses, and sit on a number of outside bodies and partnerships an increasing part of my role” (PM1 : P30)</i></p> <p><i>“A number of roles really” (PM3 : P15)</i></p> <p><i>“the role within the group” (PM3 : P15)</i></p> <p><i>“ additional burdens of the local health board” (OM5 : P43)</i></p>

Of particular note here is the fourth quotation relating to role multiplicity, reference PM3 ; P15, *“the role within the group”*. This makes specific reference to the political group role of individual members, and is a topic noticeable by its absence in interview response and feedback, despite its key function in the policy process. This relates to the work of Tucker (1981), and his notion of “direction of the political community”

#### **6.5.5.4 Working Style**

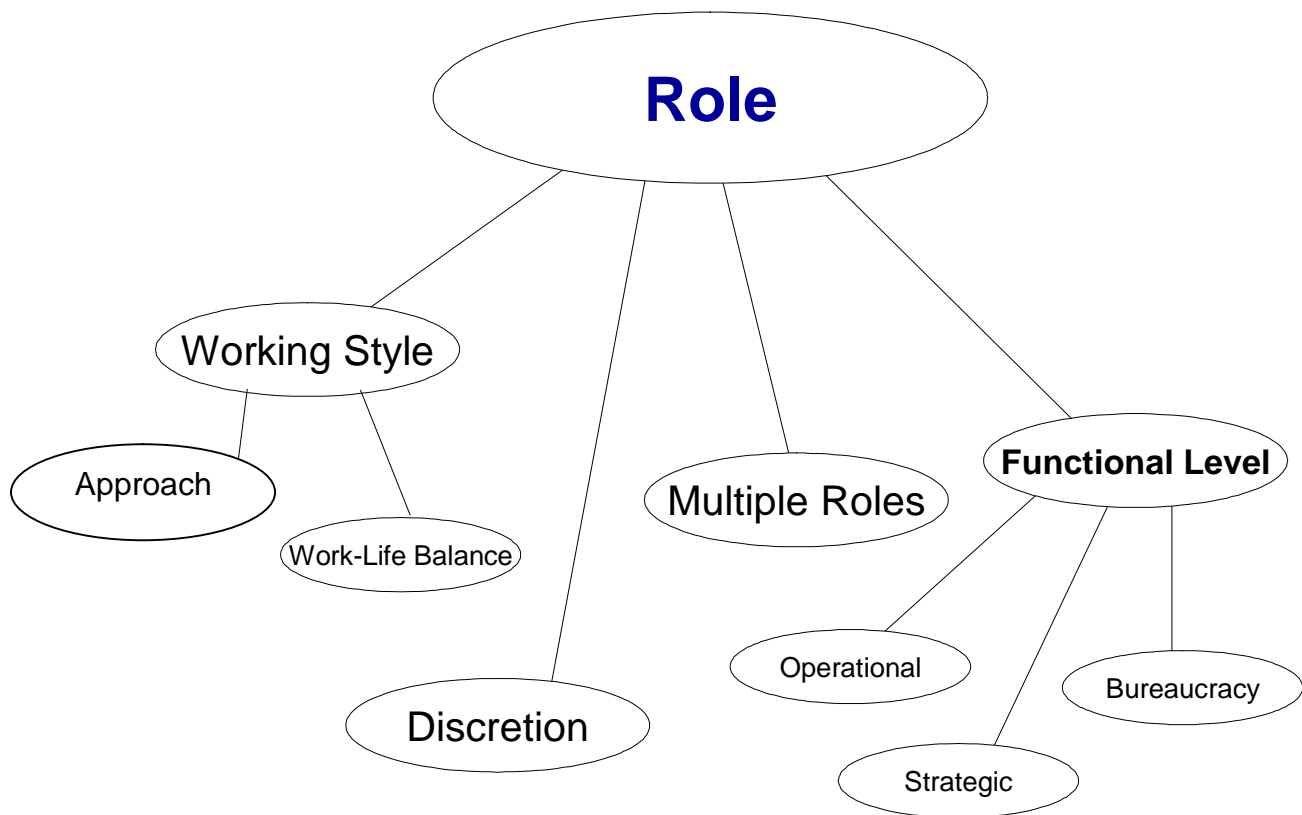
It became apparent during the interview process that a particular aspect of role was viewed as important in relation to a member’s effectiveness, namely the issue of part time against full time working, a salary dependent issue, describe in node terms as “working style”. Discussion around this led on to a related topic, namely a members approach to their role, given time and role constraint. These are demonstrated through example in the table (Table 11) below.

**Table 11 – Working Style Coding & Quotations**

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Example of Quotation</b>
<b>Work-Life Balance</b>	<p><i>“combination of full and part time is quite interesting and I think that needs to be explored more.” (PM3 : P74)</i></p> <p><i>“Do you feel your role is a full time role? Yes, very much so, to do the job properly” (PM4 : P102)</i></p> <p><i>“Beggars can’t be choosers - we are looking to get more professional and able people into taking up such a public role, but the salary level just doesn’t reflect the value of the job, so you can understand why people need to do other work besides” (PM1 : P76)</i></p> <p><i>“but other than Council there is no social life” (PM4 : P112)</i></p>
<b>Approach</b>	<p><i>“I approached it as if it was a job and I think I rapidly decided that this isn’t going to work, there is no need for one additional member of staff and really that’s not a role I can make any contribution to.” (PM5 : P15)</i></p> <p><i>“you have to work on the basis of critical intervention sometimes but lots of little interventions rather than sitting behind a desk” (PM5 : P18)</i></p>

These perceptions result in the following conceptual framework relating to role, shown as follows.

**Figure 3 - Role, Conceptual Framework**



The model highlights the distinct categories of response as utilised by the participants, and once again using their own language. As can be seen, the level of functional activity holds variance with the model derived from literature, moving from transactional and transformational to Operational, Strategic and Bureaucratic, and we have the addition of the node described as Working Style, directly relevant to Cabinet Member roles.

### **6.5.6 Context**

The importance of context has been well cited throughout literature relating to leadership, from the work of the contingency school through to the Cranfield studies of the present day.

The concept of context as utilised in the local authority arena elicited responses surrounding top teams, openness of working, political and external environments, historical and cultural factors, operational imperatives and other challenges.

In essence, it reflects the perceived working environment and situational perspective of the interview participants. In terms of nodal structure, the three codes as derived from literature in the form of our conceptual framework were readily identified by the interviewees, namely Internal, External and Top Team nodes.

In addition, a range of other contextual issues of a political nature, referred to here as political drivers, were brought forward during discussion.

#### **6.5.6.1 Political Drivers**

Taking the political node, we see a range of issues that directly reflect the democratic nature of a councillor's role, and impact upon the policies, processes, outputs, and therefore work of the officers and council itself. These are shown in Table 12, and as noted, are outside of the conceptual framework derived from literature.

Table 12 – Political Drivers Coding & Quotations

Construct	Example of Quotation
<b>Delivery and Timescale</b>	<p><i>“delivering in our timescales- there’s a tension as the officers necessarily look to the long term, and while we’d like to as politicians, there’s this 4 yr thing that gets in the way !” (PM1 : P79)</i></p> <p><i>“retaining control at the next elections” (PM1 : P56)</i></p> <p><i>“having to convince Members to look over a longer timescale.” (OM2 : P19)</i></p>
<b>Stability</b>	<i>“We run the council with a majority of one, and that doesn’t leave a lot of room for manoeuvre especially with some of the premadonna’s that we have around the place.” (PM1 : P42)</i>
<b>Stakeholders</b>	<i>“balancing the agendas of officers, members and the public, and the operational needs against those of policies, all against an environment of outside influence and regulation.” (PM1 : P39)</i>
<b>Agendas</b>	<i>“They have different agendas actually at this time and that could sometimes become clearer and also I think they have different senses of priority sometimes as well”. (OM1 : P57)</i>
<b>Will</b>	<p><i>“got to be determination from all people to hold our course” (PM1 : P79)</i></p> <p><i>“stick ability” (PM2 : P59)</i></p>
<b>Situation</b>	<i>“There aren’t many political situations I haven’t seen before, and not much that’s new.” (PM1 : P47)</i>

What we see, therefore, are a range of extra drivers relating to the political context in which local government exists.

Taking the node relating to Delivery, we see clearly that an organisational tension is created through the nature of tenure. Politicians, despite acknowledging the need for long term planning cycles ( the RCT CBC Economic Regeneration Strategy for example cites a ten year plus planning cycle), are driven by a four yearly electoral cycle, during which there is a perceived need for visible delivery, linked directly in the politicians mind with electoral success. The officer’s work to much longer

planning cycles, and thus there is a need for resolving tension through agreeing agendas.

The issue of stability and majority is of particular interest, and picks up on a point raised earlier in 6.5.5.3, Role Multiplicity, relating indirectly to the political group. The importance of a majority of one refers to the size of the majority group over the total sum of all other political members in a council, and the need, therefore, to ensure that all members of a group are in accord in terms of voting ability, and motivated to remain a member of that political group. Implicitly, this adds a further dimension to the stakeholder process the Cabinet members must go through, and to the body of people a cabinet member is accountable to. As mentioned previously, the reference to group in our conceptual framework is derived from the work of Tucker (1981) and Kakabadse & Kakabadse (2002).

Stakeholder importance reflects the nature of plurality in the public policy process arena, as discussed by Dahl (1958), and the agenda setting process is explicit in the work of Kingdon (1984). Both of these are noted in the research.

Political will, determination and commitment are direct reflections of the concepts referred to by Giacchino & Kakabadse (2003), and the factors that relate to successful implementation in a political context.

These issues will be raised and explored in the following chapter where we discuss the results.

### **6.5.6.2 Organisational Challenges**

In terms of organisational challenges, these can be separated into two distinct areas of challenge, namely operational and cultural challenges.



### 6.5.6.2.1 Operational Issues

Operational issues expressed reflect those that would be expected to be found in most organisations, including issues of budgetary concern, capacity deficits in both human and time terms, and more frequently noted (37 times of a specific nature), issues surrounding delivery. This may be related to the time of study, which as described involved a period where debate centred on budgets, capacity, delivery and performance.

**Table 13 – Operational Coding & Quotations**

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Example of Quotation</b>
<b>Delivery</b>	<p><i>“deliver to such an extent that people can see the difference, but doing so without harming the organisation” (PM1 : P56)</i></p> <p><i>“delivering on quite a huge agenda in a short timescale” (PM3 : P42)</i></p> <p><i>“delivering those that are on the agenda now is the real issue” (OM4 : P42)</i></p>
<b>Budgetary</b>	<p><i>“trying to deliver an agenda where the resources are not actually there” (PM2 : P48)</i></p> <p><i>“Obviously money is a problem” (PM2 : P33)</i></p>
<b>Capacity</b>	<p><i>“delivering on quite a huge agenda in a short timescale” (PM3 : P42)</i></p> <p><i>“balancing peoples abilities and talents” (PM3 : P81)</i></p> <p><i>“You have to look at the strength of the team” (OM4 : P19)</i></p> <p><i>“Keeping focused and optimistic about the change agenda” (OM1 : P37)</i></p>

#### ***6.5.6.2.2 Cultural Challenges***

The responses here mirrored in essence the structure of the conceptual framework derived from literature.

Strategic issues, and the need to be aware of and understand the bigger picture, related specifically to the strategic school, and the health of the whole organisation. The notion of corporate working, closely aligned to team-working, the concept of the greater good, represents an extension of the strategic thinking notion through the notion of doing. This concept therefore also echoes the notion of shared leadership

The challenge of communication is conceptually linked to both the behavioural school in terms of relations with other individuals, but also as a trait. The challenge of internal relationships makes specific reference to trust, the quality of relationship and a team-working ethic.

The concept of determination and will in relation to pursuit of objectives echoes both the trait school, but also the work of Giacchino and Kakabadse (2003), describing commitment and will as a key factor in successful implementation.

Reference was also made of maintaining the momentum of change. This has received much attention for many years given the nature of the turbulent environment (Kuhn, 1970). In the context at hand, for example, the Modernisation Agenda is one of a series of articles of policy or legislation, published on a regular basis that keeps driving local government. This is considered by the author to be different to change sustainability, which refers to maintaining a change once it has occurred.

Table 14 – Cultural Coding & Quotations

Construct	Example of Quotation
Strategic Issues	<p><i>“prepared to recognise that there is a bigger picture” (PM4 : P73)</i></p> <p><i>“make myself aware of all the issues” (PM4 : P34)</i></p> <p><i>“defining what the agenda of the Council is and defining it in terms of the areas of concern, the areas that we need improvement and the timescales that we need to do it” (PM3 : P80)</i></p>
Communication	<p><i>“communication or transparency” (PM5 : P18)</i></p> <p><i>“challenge there in being able to communicate your vision” (PM5 : P32)</i></p>
Internal Relationships	<p><i>“the quality of personal relationships and you can make structure work if get the quality of the personal relationships right” (OM3 : P51)</i></p> <p><i>“Trust framework” (OM3 : P77)</i></p> <p><i>“reinforcing the Teamwork approach to things” (OM2 : P19)</i></p> <p><i>“Either we’ll all pull together or we’re all in deep trouble” (OM2 : P37)</i></p>
Corporate Working	<p><i>“The issue at Officer level becomes one of true commitment to corporate working.” (OM2 : P37)</i></p> <p><i>“the Corporate section will sometimes lay a path that should be followed and then the ground changes. The extent to which I accommodate that and challenge that is a personal challenge for me” (OM3 : P50)</i></p>
Will & Determination	<p><i>“holding your course” (OM5 : P63) ; (PM1 : P60)</i></p> <p><i>“the motivation and confidence to get through the next stage but without compromising on what we expect or the timescale for delivering it” (OM1 : P48)</i></p>
Change Momentum	<p><i>“momentum’s the issue” (OM4 : P42)</i></p>

### 6.5.6.3 Top Team Environment

To explore Top Team applicability as per Kakabadse & Kakabadse (1999), a specific line of enquiry related to the interviewees understanding of the term “Top Team”, and its relevance in a Rhondda Cynon Taff context. In every interview, there was agreement surrounding the existence of a Top Team in RCT, together with issues that affect its functioning.

The node relating to the Top Team provides for a number of child nodes which resulted from further specific lines of enquiry. These demonstrated that openness and the ability to raise issues of a sensitive nature and debate openly, cohesion of the top team, and coherence of vision were all considered key features of effective functioning for the Cabinet.

Table 15 – Top Team Constructs and Quotations

Construct	Example of Quotation
Shared Vision	<i>“willingness to work towards a consensus viewpoint.” (PM1 : P86)</i>
Open Dialogue	<i>“What you have got to do is try and create an environment where there are people that are, how can I put it, don’t feel in any way sort-of inhibited by the fact that these forceful characters are sitting around the table” (OM2 : P25)</i>
Cohesion	<i>“team-working and a trust in each others abilities and viewpoints.” (PM1 : P86)</i>

The extent of agreement with these issues was not questioned though issues relating to this were noted, and detailed in the following table.

**Table 16 – Top Team Issues - Quotations**

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Example of Quotation</b>
<b>Issues</b>	<p><i>“enormous respect for Members of the Cabinet, but I don’t think we sit down and share our thoughts with each other. I think there is an element of paranoia” (OM3 : P95)</i></p> <p><i>“very often people are afraid to speak their mind” (PM2 : P68)</i></p> <p><i>“there probably is (coherence of vision), at least from those who have the capability to think on that level” (OM1 : P67)</i></p> <p><i>“not always full acceptance and consensus about the issues were working on, whether by members, officers or both”. (PM1 : P67)</i></p>

Additionally, there were a number of views surrounding the membership of the Top team. Although the most described conception is of a top team comprising the ten cabinet members plus officer support, other perceptions see the top team as either comprising simply members, simply officers, a subset of either, or a mixture of both,

These responses are reproduced below in Table 17 – Perceptions relating to Membership of Top Team, and demonstrate a perceived conception of Top Team as ranging from either the politicians, officers, both working together, or subsets of all of the above as representing the Top Team.

**Table 17 – Perceptions relating to Membership of Top Team**

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Example of Quotation</b>
<b>Perceived Membership</b>	<p><i>“Often, it’s just a group of us me, you, John Codd, plus some of the officers Kim (the chief exec), Keith Griffiths, plus maybe one or two of the group directors.” (PM1 : P69)</i></p> <p><i>“I think it’s a top team, I think the top team consists at this moment of Pauline as Leader, yourself as Deputy Leader, myself as Business Manager and Syd as the Special Projects whatever. I think it’s pretty well recognised that we 4 make the top team.” (PM2 : P45)</i></p> <p><i>“a top team but its not a single top team, I think it’s a multi-layered thing and its different teams for different purposes” (PM3 : P57)</i></p> <p><i>“Its (the top team) definitely a combination of both (officers &amp; members)” (PM3 : P60)</i></p> <p><i>“The Top Team to me here is the Cabinet and the Corporate Management Team who work together” (OM4 : P48)</i></p> <p><i>“I identify with it (top team) wholly as far the officer top team is concerned” (OM3 : P94)</i></p> <p><i>“I see it as Rhondda Cynon Taff limited. We get together with the Senior Members of the Authority, I see it as one team, or be it, we’ll recognise that we’ve got different roles within our team.” (OM2 : P17)</i></p> <p><i>“new structure for decision making we brought in at the beginning was that there should be a top team which was composed of 2 elements and was really a way to marry productively the political and managerial perspectives of the Council. That’s actually when a Council works best is when that happens, you need good officers and you need good politicians to lead the process, but they also need to work together otherwise things don’t happen. The problem for the politicians is they can’t deliver anything unless it’s through the officers. The trouble for the officers is, without political leadership they don’t get any sense of direction or authority, so the two have to recognise their mutual dependence and work together.” (OM1 : P51)</i></p>

### 6.5.6.4 External Environment

The final node of analysis relating to context refers to issues of an external nature. Firstly, as expected we find issues relating to responding to external pressures and challenges, and the notion becoming more common in the public sector relating to Partnership Working, seen by both officers and members alike as part of their role, and an integral method of engaging directly with the environment of the organisation. Related quotations are shown in Table 18 – External Environment Coding & Quotations.

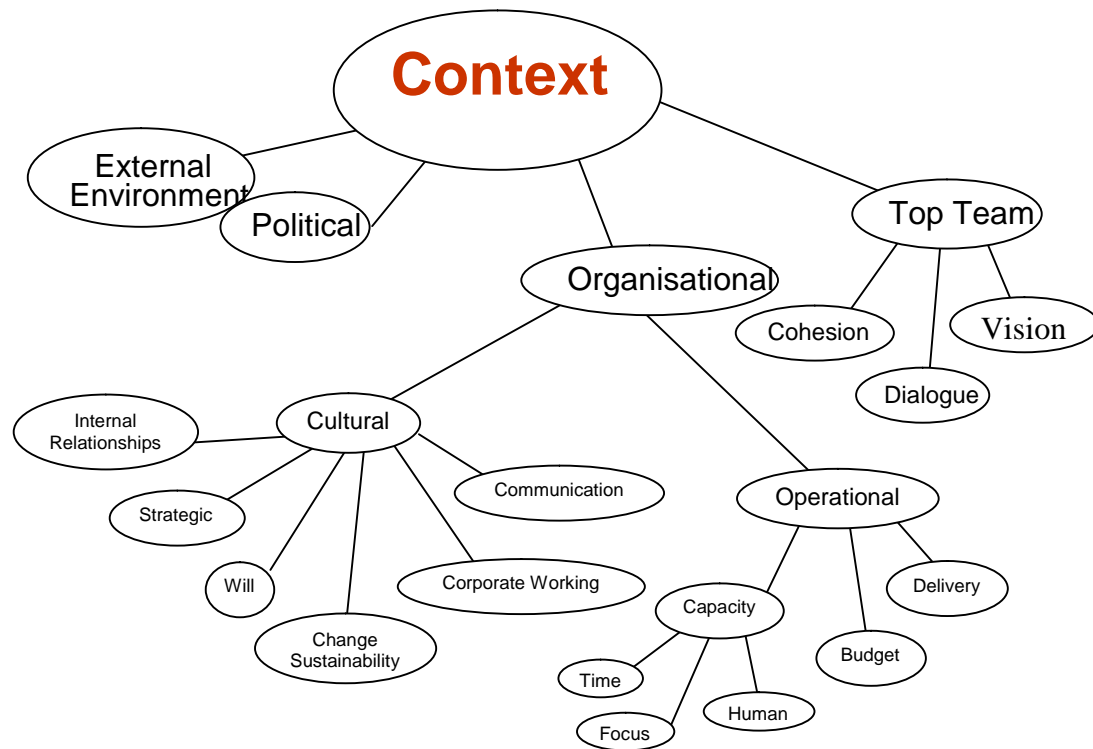
This area features strongly in terms of the literature surrounding both the strategic schools of thought, literature surrounding stakeholder power and pressure (plurality, etc) and the work of Kakabadse & Kakabadse (1999) who identify the extended role of partnership working.

**Table 18 – External Environment Coding & Quotations**

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Example of Quotation</b>
<b>External Drivers</b>	<i>“(challenges) don’t just come from the Cabinet, they come from, in the case of Community Care, from the Assembly, they come from the Wales Programme for Improvement, you know, so there is always an issue that needs to be managed in a particular way” (OM5 : P99)</i>
<b>Partnership Working</b>	<p><i>“so many key players that have to be involved, heard and happy” (PM1 : P42)</i></p> <p><i>“if you’ve got organisations and structures outside the Council box that is part of that agenda” (PM3 : P120)</i></p> <p><i>“ additional burdens of the local health board” (OM5 : P43)</i></p> <p><i>“Mobilising our partners in the Community, mobilising voluntary sector, business working with other partners” (OM4 : P22)</i></p> <p><i>“ partnership with somebody, that is really difficult because you are trying to take with you a whole range of organisations who have their own agenda for different personalities” (OM5 : P63)</i></p>

This gives rise to the conceptual framework shown below in below.

**Figure 4, Context - Conceptual Framework**



**Source – Derived by author**

Once again, the model shows distinct similarities with that derived from literature. We can see the nodes relating to Internal (Organisational) and External Environment, together with reference to the concept of the Top Team. Each of these has been further defined in turn, demonstrating further relation to literature.

The clear addition to the model, however, is the notion of “Political” context. This is clearly a contextual node, related to the culture of local government.



## 6.5.7 Capabilities

The interview process elicited an extensive, though not exhaustive, list of capabilities perceived by officers and members as being necessary in overcoming the challenges facing the individuals, the Cabinet or the organisation. These fit well with the framework from literature, and have accordingly been coded under two sibling nodes, character and competences.

### 6.5.7.1 Character

The character node has its roots in the academic school described earlier as the trait school of leadership, part of the “born to lead” school. Underneath the parent node, a number of sibling nodes have evolved, mirroring the described perceptions of the participants.

The respondents made specific mention of four concepts, as follows: Determination, or being driven, as noted by Ghiselli (1963); Judgement, as noted by Fiedler (1970); a sense of humour, noted by two interviewees (*OM2: P53*); (*OM5: P67*); and understanding, whether it be of role, self or context (all identified by child nodes in the final conceptual framework)

Examples of the response are detailed below in Table 19 – Character – Construct & Quotations

**Table 19 – Character – Construct & Quotations**

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Example of Quotation</b>
<b>Determination</b>	<p><i>“got to be determination from all people to hold our course” (PM1 : P79)</i></p> <p><i>“stick ability” (PM2 : P59)</i></p> <p><i>“an ability to overcome difficulties” (OM5 : P19)</i></p>
<b>Understanding</b>	<p><i>“understanding I think of the different roles” (PM4 : P40)</i></p> <p><i>“some individuals sometimes speaking on issues that don’t relate to their portfolio” (PM4 : P75)</i></p> <p><i>“I probably work to my ability, wherever I can make an impact” (PM4 : P75)</i></p> <p><i>“breadth of knowledge of local government and perhaps all kinds of government” (PM4 : P78)</i></p> <p><i>“understanding of all aspects of local government” (PM4 : P78)</i></p> <p><i>“understand the structure of budgets and generally the sort of tensions that are about” (PM5 : P35)</i></p> <p><i>“There aren’t many political situations I haven’t seen before, and not much that’s new.” (PM1 : P47)</i></p> <p><i>“experience of having seen these issues before, experience with the way that local government offices, like any bureaucracy work” (PM3 : P48)</i></p>
<b>Judgement</b>	<p><i>“Judgement I’ve got a good empathy with the needs of the public, I know instinctively where people are coming from, and I’m good at reading situations.” (PM1 : P49)</i></p> <p><i>“if you don’t have judgement you’re dead basically” (OM3 : P71)</i></p>
<b>Humour</b>	<p>noted by two interviewees (OM2 : P53) ; (OM5 : P67)</p>

### **6.5.7.2 Competences**

This reflects the body of work from the developmental school and the theories relating to transactional and transformational leadership. The node relating to competences leans itself to being subdivided into two child nodes, separated into personal competences and relational competences.

#### ***6.5.7.2.1 Relational Competences***

The relational school can be likened to the academic writings encompassing the Behavioural School. For example, Likert (1961) talked about a need to focus on a leader's interaction with their followers; that relationships with others in the organisation reflected on organisational outcomes. Cyert and March (1963) referred to communication and management of stakeholders.

A number of child nodes were coded underneath the relation node, namely Interactive Skills, Communication Skills, subdivided into the child nodes of listening and talking, and Nurturing. Relevant Quotations are shown in Table 20.

**Table 20 – Relational Coding & Quotations**

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Example of Quotation</b>
<b>Interactive</b>	<i>“develop a network of intelligent agents” (OM1 : P34)</i>
	<i>“you need high skills, persuasion, negotiation, interaction with people generally,” (OM1 : P40)</i>
	<i>“You need all sorts of skills about working in partnership with others, developing trust, buying from other people, a lot of that is down to personal credibility.” (OM1 : P40)</i>
	<i>“ability to motivate people, staff at all levels” (OM1 : P44)</i>
<b>Communication</b>	<i>“listening to what people say people aren’t afraid to confide in me” (PM1 : P51)</i>
	<i>“having an empathy and an understanding of where others are coming” (OM2 : P9)</i>
	<i>the ability to talk to most people (PM2 : P38)</i>
<b>Nurturing</b>	<i>“able to develop loyalty in people, not just to the organisation’s mission, but to you personally as a leader within” (OM1 : P44)</i>
	<i>“to develop and lead a team at a senior level” (OM1 : P44)</i>

#### **6.5.7.2.2 Personal Competences**

In terms of the Personal Competence node, there are once again a number of child nodes, described by the participants as strategic competences, creativity, sustaining change, political sensitivity, and general skills.

Many of these are reflected in the Strategic School of leadership, which suggests a motivation through concern for the evolution of an organisation as a whole involving its aims and capabilities. Once again, Cyert & March (1963) describe creation and communication of vision, Senge (1992) talks about sensitivity and a visionary focus.

These are separated into four separate child nodes, namely Strategic Ability, Creativity, Political Sensitivity and General Skills, named through the language of the respondents, and examples of quotations are given in Table 21.

## Table 21 – Personal Competence Coding and Quotations

During a number of interviews, there was opportunity also to explore directly whether or not it was perceived that members and officers capability requirements differ. The elicited response to such questioning bears direct relationship to the individual interviewee's perception about the role of member versus the role of the officer, though perhaps the most telling response was as follows:

*“The capabilities that the Members will need will, to some extent, reflect some of the capabilities officers will need. I think they'll (Cabinet Members) actually need stronger leadership capabilities of articulating the vision, articulating the priorities, knowing what they are and holding officer to account into” (OM3 : P122)*

**Table 21 – Personal Competence Coding and Quotations**

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Example of Quotation</b>
<b>Strategic</b>	<i>“looking a little bit beyond.” (PM4 : P75)</i>
	<i>“set out direction and a vision” (PM5 : P32)</i>
	<i>“being able to think strategically” (OM3 : P63)</i>
	<i>“at my level you have to kind of stand back and be able to draw a conceptual map or a strategic central concept around what looks like a blizzard of activity to make sense of it all” (OM3 : P63)</i>
<b>Creativity</b>	<i>“need similar capabilities therefore in the politicians and the offices, the strategic overview, the ability to stand back from details to take a longer term view, but also the ability to work with others to deliver” (OM1 : P64)</i>
	<i>“we often come up with some cracking schemes and they’re really, really good” (PM4 : P69)</i>
	<i>“ability to use their university training to work laterally” (PM2 : P57)</i>
	<i>“very innovative people” (OM4 : P65)</i>
<b>Political Sensitivity</b>	<i>“you have to be aware of how politically sensitive everything is” (OM2 : P11)</i>
	<i>“explain to politicians what is achievable on the political front” (OM2 : P15)</i>
<b>General Skills</b>	<i>“an element of specific knowledge about service areas otherwise you won’t have professional credibility” (OM3 : P59)</i>
	<i>“all quite experienced, we have different backgrounds” (OM4 : P63)</i>
	<i>“to research and get as much information as possible before you make the call” (OM3 : P71)</i>
	<i>“good at project managing” (OM4 : P38)</i>

Reference is also made to the abilities and capabilities of those occupying a cabinet role in operating as the role demands.

*“there are probably a minority of Cabinet members which see the whole picture”*  
**(PM3 : P74)**

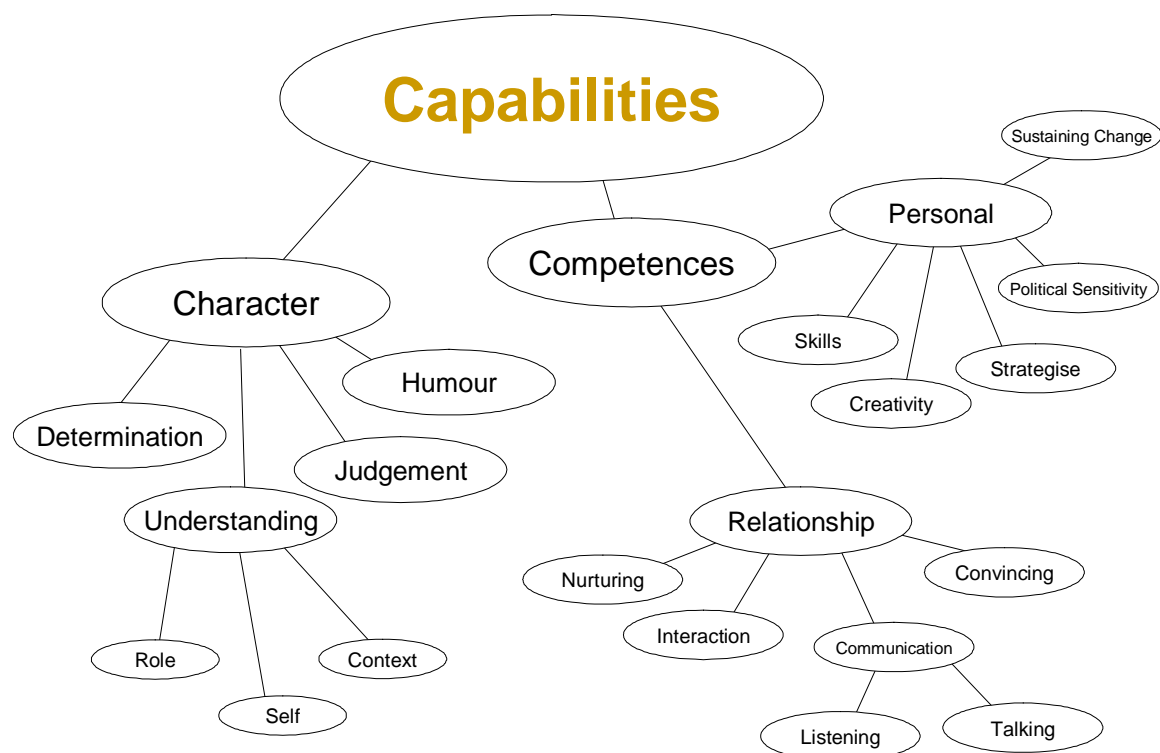
*“I think there is an interesting issue that with a Cabinet of only 10, it’s still actually difficult to get the same consistent quality across that team and that raises its own problem.”* **(OM1 : P54)**

In addition, specific reference was made to the notion of balancing a portfolio of capabilities, irrespective of whether they lie on the officer or member side of the authority. **(PM1 : P96)**



Pictorially, this provides us with the following Conceptual Framework.

**Figure 5, Capabilities - Conceptual Framework**



Source – Compiled by Author

The model clearly follows the concepts derived from literature, once again defined by the language and perceptions of respondents.

### 6.5.8 Discussion of Analysis

Analysis of the transcripts has been through the programme Nvivo, which has proved invaluable, through an iterative process of coding, in achieving a structure suitable for creating a combined understanding of the perceptions of players involved in the Top Team at RCT CBC.

Much of the data from the interviews followed a course as expected from the Literature Review, and as a result fitted the conceptual framework for research derived from the literature.

However, a number of concepts were described in the interviews that indicated a possible extension to that framework.

These similarities and disparities will be explored in the next section.

## **6.6 Results – Discussion**

### **6.6.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter outlined a series of concepts coded within the conceptual framework derived from the literature using the language of the respondents themselves.

In this chapter, the intention is to provide closer inspection of those results to illustrate areas of similarity or difference between the shared perceptions of the respondents and the literature, both in terms of concepts and language.

Here, I must acknowledge that any such interpretations that are made must be tempered with the limit that I have personal knowledge of the context and interviewees, and therefore the analysis will be subject to an element of personal bias.

### **6.6.2 Discussion of Results**

#### **6.6.2.1 Background**

The findings from background produced a range of coding essentially as would have been expected from both literature and intuition. As noted in the previous section, all interviewees provided a rich account of their background, which fitted well within the traditional delineation of Training, Work Experience and Cultural Exposure. The concepts outlined here strongly relate to the work of Hambrick & Mason (1984), and Hambrick & Cho (1996).

Taking cultural exposure first, there were two distinct areas described, local cultural experience or understanding, together with a wider cultural exposure through travel or work abroad.

Training for each was a mix of academic background, professional training or training “on the job”. Although overall the level of academic and professional development

was described to be at a higher level within the officer respondents, the member respondents also outlined a range of academic and professional qualifications that had been obtained.

The descriptions of Work Experience outlined histories that encompassed operational and managerial elements, with the balance over time moving from the former to the latter as roles changed with career growth. Further, the “General” node refers to the notion that a broad range of experiences in the work place, from employment in the army to sole trader ownership of a family butchers shop, provides a rich texture of experience for breadth of understanding. Finally, the perceived importance of involvement in the public sector over a number of years was reflected throughout the interviews. This relates closely to what Kakabadse & Kakabadse (1999) describe as tenure in their work on Top Teams.

### **6.6.2.2 Role**

The literature driven conceptual framework identified three nodes for coding, namely Discretion, Role Multiplicity and the Transactional / Transformational Balance. Each of these had been reflected in the interview process.

#### ***6.6.2.2.1 Discretion***

The notion of Discretion mirrored the work of Jaques (1951), where officers and members described the amount of discretion or choice they have in their roles. A role difference emerged between officers and members such that whilst officers enjoyed a degree of discretion through their role position in the authority, cabinet members, being democratically elected, had a far higher degree of discretion role.

#### ***6.6.2.2.2 Role Multiplicity***

Role multiplicity has featured in the work of Kakabadse & Kakabadse (1999) and Hambrick & Mason (1984), and many respondents from both member and officer cadre described the notion of multiple role occupancy.

For example, a councillor in the cabinet occupies a corporate role; a ward role described as community leadership; a partnership role normally in both spatial and thematic terms; and is also likely to sit as a board member on a range of other organisations.

There is an inherent tension here that a conflict of interest may well occur. For example, councillors often occupy the role of School Governor through the Local Management of School legislation. However, there is often need to reconcile the need of the school with the corporate good of the authority.

#### ***6.6.2.2.3 Functional Level***

Although one respondent did note the concept of transactional and transformational balance, the language of respondents tended to produce a differing classification, although the understanding was the same. Interviewees more readily provided the terms Managerial (transformational), Operational (transactional) and Bureaucratic (transactional) time.

Although the use of language provided a variance from the conceptual framework derived from literature (see Kakabadse & Kakabadse, 1999), it was not the most interesting element to this issue. When undertaking the introductory interviews, I noted what I had originally interpreted to be a difference in the perception of the role of the Cabinet Member between member and officer.

The constitution of the local authority provides clear guidance. The role of the officer is both strategic and operational, whilst the role of the Cabinet Member is to provide strategic direction for their portfolio, and to provide operational guidance in terms of

implementation – not to become directly involved in operational issues. Thus, the Officer role is Transactional and Transformational, whilst the member role is transformational to a far greater extent.

The initial interviews, and subsequent in-depth interviews, noted that some of the member respondents described their perception of role as also driving and being involved with implementation, as noted in Hambrick & Mason (1984). This is at variance with the role defined by constitution, and it was an issue raised by officers who suggested that members should understand and remain within the boundaries of their defined role, i.e. discretion should have its limits.

However, responses derived later in the interviews surrounding the perceived political driver of “delivery within timescale” (described in section 4.4.3.1) would suggest that it is not a difference of perception that is the driver for this disparity, but rather the perceived difference between delivery timescale wishes of officers and members that drives a Cabinet Member to become more closely involved with the implementation process (see Kakabadse & Giacchino, 2003).

Interestingly, although operating on a bureaucratic level is acknowledged by all participants, the intimated value of time spent on such activity appears low. The richness of feedback on this issue points to the perception that the bureaucratic elements are a distraction, although in constitutional terms it is this element of bureaucracy, for example the formal cabinet meetings, are the point in the process where a policy is formally adopted by Council, and the public first receives sight of the final policy itself.

#### ***6.6.2.2.4 Working Style and hours of work***

This element, although not linked through the literature review to a body of work, relates directly to the nature of the Cabinet Members Role. The Cabinet Role is salaried as a part time job, and without management or delivery responsibilities. As such, the perception is that this dictates a particular style of work and approach to role that differs from the Officers, who are permanent employees on full time salaries.

### **6.6.2.3 Context**

#### ***6.6.2.3.1 Organisational Issues***

Cultural Drivers within the organisation once again reflected those as one would have derived from the conceptual model. Of note here was the distinction between strategic working, the notion of understanding the big picture relating to the organisation and its environment, and of corporate working, used in the language of the respondents to relate to the concept of action in a team sense to deliver the strategy – the separation of thinking strategically, and doing something for the good of the corporate whole. This echoes the concepts from the Strategic School in the work of Rowe (2001) and Selznick (1957).

Operational issues expressed reflect those that would be expected to be found in most organisations, including issues of budgetary concern, capacity deficits in both human and time terms, and more frequently noted (37 times of a specific nature), issues surrounding delivery. This holds clear parallels with the work of Kakabadse & Giacchino (2003). This may be related to the time of study, which as described involved a period where debate centred on budgets, capacity, delivery and performance.

#### ***6.6.2.3.2 Top Team***

The notion of the Top Team as described by Kakabadse & Kakabadse (1999 and subsequent work) was strongly evident to each respondent, and the perception of each individual participant was one of belonging to the Top Team. Further, as expected from the conceptual framework as derived from literature, the issues of Top Team cohesion, cohesion of vision and openness of dialogue were issues that all perceived as playing a part in the context of operation of the Top Team.

Of interest, therefore, is the difference in perception of the membership of “The Top Team”. Whilst there was an overall perception of working in “Team RCT”, the responses demonstrated that there was a perceived hierarchy even within the Top Team. The Top Team was differently described as a group of four members (Leader, Deputy Leader, Business Manager and a Cabinet Member), perhaps extended to include the Chief Executive and one or two other Cabinet Members. Often, the Officer group was not included in descriptions of the Top Team, or by one officer, the Top Team was described as being exclusively made up of officers.

The constitutional makeup of the Cabinet is ten Cabinet Members, serviced by officers. The policy drive has always been one of creating a team of officers and members. The perceived reality appears to be one of power based cadres.

#### ***6.6.2.3.3 Political Drivers***

A range of political drivers were derived from feedback of respondents, though it should be noted that such feedback was not frequent, nor was it made in specific reference to political activity. These related to delivery to electoral timescale, political will and commitment (Kakabadse & Giacchino, 2003), together with political management of stakeholders and political stability (Boal & Hooijberg, 2001).

#### **6.6.2.4 Capabilities**

The feedback surrounding capability requirements mirrors the conceptual framework as derived from literature, encapsulating the competence and ability lists from trait theory, the relational skills from the behavioural school, and the strategic requirements from the strategic school and the capability notion from the Top Team theorists.

Of note was the capability mentioned relating to Political Sensitivity, though this was the only element linking the capability requirements to a political context in this section.



### **6.6.2.5 The Influence of Politics and the Role of the “Group”**

Perhaps of greatest note in this whole discussion is the emergence that, on face value, there was little response to question outlining political activity or political drivers, only the occasional quotation giving describing a political influence.

My personal perceived understanding of the context of local government is that politics has a key influence on the leadership process, even though this influence has only been hinted at through the responses highlighted.

From the outset, when we look at the policy process in RCT CBC, we note that the final decision on whether a paper becomes policy i.e. is placed on the agenda for Formal Cabinet, rests with the Group of the majority group. This body is made up of all the Councillors of that political affiliation who sit on RCT CBC. Yet there is scant reference to the Group in leadership terms by either member or officer. The concept of direction of political communities is to be found in literature, for example Tucker (1981).

If we more closely examine the discussion of results, a deeper picture emerges. When interviewees talk of political delivery of objectives, this is reference to service or infrastructure improvements to communities, groups or businesses. However, whilst these represent a client to the Council, they also represent a ward constituent of a Councillor. Therefore, when Cabinet Members talk of delivery for stakeholders, they are also talking about backbench members of the Group as stakeholders (Reference Boal & Hooijberg, 2001). This is an inherent part of the decision making process when taking policies to Group.

In terms of composition of the Top Team, it is interesting to note the perceived existence of cabals, as the cabals relating to members have a further significance. For example the Respondent who quoted the membership of the Top Team as being the Leader, Deputy Leader, Business Manager and Cabinet Member for Improvement

actually described the senior four members of Group (Leader, Deputy Leader, Whip and Secretary).

Political Stability and a majority of one are key, but actually relates to Group stability. If the whip is functioning properly, and the Group makes a decision, then the majority of one is meaningless, rather a position of balancing Group members, their positions within the authority (which actually reflect their position in the Group) and their requirements for delivery in ward terms.

One of the issues raised related to the capability of members to effectively operate in their role, be it strategically, or even operationally (Jaques, 1951; Kakabadse & Kakabadse, 1999). This issue relates to the democratic process in local government itself. The Modernisation Agenda provides for the creation of a Cabinet made up of ten members (in RCT) who take not only specific but also a particular thematic service delivery responsibility. However, Councillors are not elected to such a role; rather they are elected to become a representative of their local community. In reality, a Councillor is often elected not on the basis of skill or knowledge, but on the basis of whether or not they are liked in a community. These roles obviously require different skill sets.

This gives rise to a disparity between responsibility and accountability. For example, the Cabinet Member for Economic Development has responsibility for that portfolio, but is accountable not to the organisation, but rather to the Group who appoint to the Cabinet position, and to the Ward to whom the Cabinet Member is a local representative.

This means that, although the concepts of Top Team theory appear to bear relevance, the Cabinet structure “Top Team” is in actual fact neither the Top Team described in literature (exclusively Executive Directors) nor Board (Non-Executive Directors), but actually lies somewhere in between.

These issues are obviously important in the conceptual understanding of leadership in a local government context, and therefore warrant further investigation, not only to

gain a greater understanding of their meaning and relevance, but also to gain insight into the reason behind the apparent non disclosure surrounding the subject.

## **6.7 *Contribution to Knowledge (theory & praxis)***

### **6.7.1 Contribution to Academic Knowledge**

The earlier exploration of Prior Research led us through a range of schools relating to leadership in broad terms, from the Born to Lead School, the Developmental School and the Contingency School, up to the so called “New Age” Leadership theorists and the notion of discretionary leadership with Jaques (1951), Hambrick and Mason (1984) and their papers surrounding Upper Echelon Theory, and most recently Kakabadse (1999) and the Cranfield Top Executive Competence Studies.

This reflects a shift in thinking to a contextually dependent set of competence requirements based upon role, framed within a developmental philosophy. Further, the emphasis is of Top Team and cadre dynamics rather than personal leadership.

To date, the studies have explored this framework across a range of specific contexts, including the Civil Service, NHS Trusts, and extensively in the Private Sector on an international basis.

This project has undertaken research to explore these concepts in a local government setting in the specific case study of RCT CBC to establish an understanding of leadership, and perceived leadership requirements. From the discussion so far, we can see that, on face value, this is the case, although there are differences in language as expressed by participants.

Of critical importance has been the conclusion that the Cabinet in RCT CBC reflects neither the Top Team nor Board structure of literature, but rather something entirely different due to the separation of responsibility and accountability.

Also, the whole nature of political influence and process has emerged as a key constituent of any framework derived from participant’s perceptions. Although some areas are addressed in literature (commitment, stakeholder management, ownership),

a number of additional factors have emerged, for example the role of the Group, Role in the Group and Group Stability.

### **6.7.2 Contribution to Practitioner Knowledge**

From a practitioner perspective, local government in Wales is entering a new era, both in terms of the structure and therefore roles of actors involved, and framed with a context of annually reducing budgets together with higher demands for quality and choice of services.

Although there are many development programmes generally available for a non specific context, there is a tendency for them to be technical in nature, and untested in terms of their appropriateness. I&DeA (the Development body for Local Government in England) delivers the Leadership Academy, though their target is the creation of the charismatic, self confident leader, rather than the team based, developmental approach.

A number of pragmatic outcomes are apparent. Firstly, it establishes from a practitioner perspective a richer understanding of the context and challenges that are facing the Cabinet in terms of the Modernisation Agenda, and provides some initial thoughts as to those competences and capabilities that are perceived as useful in operating under such a context. This may provide a guide to a more tailored development programme.

Also, it raises explicitly the role of the Group in Local Government, something specifically excluded from the legislation and policy guidance currently covering the Modernisation Agenda.

## **6.8 Summary of Chapter**

The research has provided a rich understanding and analysis of the context and challenges of local government in Rhondda Cynon Taff Council, together with leadership requirements, as perceived by members of the legislatively defined Cabinet.

Further, the conceptual framework derived from literature has achieved a degree of face validity through the process. More specifically, the concepts described in Top Team theory and Upper Echelon theory can be seen to be reflected throughout each interview.

However, a number of issues relating to political influences were raised that have not been previously raised through the literature review. These warrant further research and exploration before wider testing utilising a survey methodology can be adopted.

## **6.9 Next Steps**

### **6.9.1 Research Proposal for Project 2**

In Project II, I would propose to utilise a similar philosophical and methodological approach to Project I, namely a social constructivist positioning and a qualitative mode of enquiry.

The purpose of this mode of research is to utilise the learning from Project I surrounding the notions of political influence and the role of the Group, to gain a deeper understanding of leadership in Top Teams in RCT CBC.

I would propose to use the same respondents as Project I, as the objective is to gain an understanding of the shared meaning of leadership, and therefore perceptions of both member and officer participants must be explored.

A possible protocol could include the following points for enquiry:

1. Describe your perception and understanding of the following :
  - a. The political structure of the Council
  - b. The membership and structure of the majority group
  - c. Group Processes
  - d. Organisational influence of the group
  - e. The impact of the above
2. Democratic Deficit – the disparity between responsibility, role and accountability of Cabinet Members, and its impact on the Top Team, with specific reference to capability and role
3. The existence of Cabals in the Group, and perceptions of their impact and effectiveness
4. The impact of political stability
5. Perceptions of and differences between political and organisational objectives, and their impact
6. The implications of part time / non salaried Cabinet posts

### **6.9.2 Research Proposal for Project 3**

Project III represents the second part of the two-phase design outlined earlier in this document. The objective is to develop a survey questionnaire based upon the existing Kakabadse framework to explore the validity of concepts and language as established in Project I & Project II across a wider audience, namely local government throughout Wales.

As such, a possible title would be:

“An Exploration of the shared understanding of the meaning of leadership and leadership capability requirements in ‘top teams’ consisting of politicians and council officers in local authorities in Wales”

This would give rise to the following research Question, as follows:

Having adjusted the framework for a local authority context, is the learning from the RCT CBC case study in terms of challenges and capability requirements replicable over all local authorities in Wales for professionals, politicians or both?

In practical terms, this means that Project III moves onto a wider study involving a survey across equal numbers of council members and officers who operate in ‘Top Teams’ across the 22 Unitary Authorities in Wales, utilising the questionnaire as validated in Project I.

This will allow a quantitative analysis, enabling both greater validation of the initial results, and testing of comparison against results from existing Cranfield Executive Competence studies.

Obviously, this denotes a shift to a more positivist stance, replicating the methodological approach of the earlier Kakabadse & Kakabadse (1999) studies.



# Cranfield University

School of Management

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Understanding Leadership in Local Government

## **PROJECT 2**

Supervisor: Professor Andrew Kakabadse  
Professor Nada Korac-Kakabadse  
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Academic Year 2003 to 2004

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# ABSTRACT

The research project seeks to bridge the theoretic divide between a qualitative case study exploring a conceptual model of leadership, and a quantitative study testing those concepts on a wider audience.

It is in essence a methodological paper involving the adaptation of an existing questionnaire (the Kakabadse Top Team Framework) with validated scales, utilising an iterative process of refining language and concept until a point of face validity is reached with the new evolving instrument.



## **7 Project 2 - Bridging the Theoretical Divide**

### **7.1 Overview**

#### **7.1.1 Context**

Local Government in the UK is in a process of continuous change. The drivers for this are numerous – the modernisation agenda; increased customer demand for choice and quality; central government legislation, policy and budgetary settlements; increasing demand to work in partnership, the list goes on.

The Government have acknowledged that Leadership at local level is central to achieving positive social outcomes within this context. Further, that local leadership shall have the flexibility to shape that delivery of services in terms of structure, process and outcome dependent on local needs.

The purpose of this thesis is to gain an understanding of what leadership means in a local authority through the perceptions of those who have the defined role of leading it.

#### **7.1.2 Background – Project 1**

Project1 involved an exploratory qualitative case study involving a series of semi-structured interviews exploring the understanding of leadership in a particular authority, namely Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council.

A Conceptual Framework was drawn from literature and utilised as an instrument for coding respondents perceptions. The guiding theoretical underpinning derived from the work of Hambrick and Mason (Upper Echelon Theory) and Kakabadse and Kakabadse (Top Team Theory).

Although much of the data from the interviews reflected the framework derived from literature (pre-coded results), a number of elements were emergent often relating to the political context of leadership in a local authority.

The theoretic conceptual framework was then adapted based upon the perceptions captured through coding.

### **7.1.3 Research Issue**

Project 1 developed a conceptual framework for the understanding of leadership through the perceptions of members of the Top Team in Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC.

However, this is one authority of many. It is a County Borough Council in Wales. Local Authorities also encompass district, county and city Councils, each of which has a degree of local flexibility to determine structure, process and outputs.

The ambition, therefore, is to test the strength of the findings from Project1 across a wider audience through a survey methodology. By necessity, this involves the utilisation of a research instrument that allows enquiry across the concepts described in the adapted framework.

Thus, the research issue for project two is the development of suitable instrument suitable for this purpose.

### **7.1.4 Chapter summary**

The project therefore proposes to develop a suitable instrument that will allow the wider testing of the learning from Project 1, namely the adapted conceptual framework describing the perceptions of leadership understanding in the top team of Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC.

## **7.2 Theoretical Positioning**

### **7.2.1 Introduction**

The initial proposal for researching the understanding of leadership in local government had been to utilise a two-phase approach. The first phase was to undertake a qualitative interpretive study to construct a conceptual model. The second phase proposes to explore wider applicability of this framework across a wider representative sample, implying a positivist, quantitative approach.

Project 1, in essence Phase 1 of a two phase approach, adopted a constructivist interpretive approach involving socially constructed realities, utilising a qualitative interview methodology within a specific case study to elicit respondents perceptions and develop a conceptual framework.

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Projects 2 and 3 represent the second Phase of research, and suggest a shift in both philosophical approach and methodology. These, together with resultant tensions and implications, will be explored through the following literature review.

### **7.2.2 Literature review**

Here, we will explore in depth the notion of a “two phase approach” – its development and underpinning philosophy, together with tensions and implications arising from mixed methodologies.

Project 1 drew on the underlying assumptions of a socially constructed reality involving a value-laden environment. Its purpose was to secure the input of a range of individuals with a participant understanding of leadership in a Cabinet Team context, and then to explore that understanding with the objective of evolving a framework of leadership.

This necessitated a level of discourse in a semi-structured fashion, which prompted the adoption of a qualitative approach within the social constructivism school, allowing exploration of understanding, attributes and values.

For the social constructivist, the world exists not only in tangible format, but also through the interpretation of those who inhabit the world. Reality is the product of the meanings given to it by persons, community and society.

Project 2 represents a methodological paper that seeks to produce a suitable instrument to enable wider engagement, response and analysis based upon learning from the earlier qualitative study. The proposed purpose of project 3 is notionally to explore whether the conceptual model, associated relationships and language developed from qualitative enquiry in Project 1 (in the context of Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC, a Welsh Unitary Authority) have any degree of relevance in a wider context.

This suggests, as described above, a change of methodology to one which allows the testing of validity of constructs across a wider audience, and a shift to a more positivist approach. Therefore, we need to explore any inherent tensions in moving from the social constructivist approach noted above to what appears a more positivist stance suggested by the notions of generalisation, quantification and quantitative analysis.

### **7.2.3 Philosophical Stance**

We begin with an exploration of the literature domain associated with positivism, the perceived conflict with social-constructivism (described in Project 1), notions of validity and multi-strategy or two phase design methodologies.

#### **7.2.3.1 Positivism**

The key position of positivism as noted by Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe (2002) is the notion that the social world exists externally, and as such, its properties can be



measured through an objective mechanism, rather than inferred through sensation, reflection or intuition.

In their book, Easterby-Smith and Lowe (2002) note the work of Comte (1853), who declares that there can be no real knowledge unless it is based upon observed facts.

Thus, there are two inherent assumptions here. Firstly, the ontological assumption that reality is both objective and external. Secondly, an epistemological assumption that knowledge is only of significance if it is based upon observations of the external reality.

Further, Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe (2002) describe a set of resultant implications worthy of consideration by social researchers, as follows:

**Table 22 Positivism Conditions**

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**Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe (2002) – Positivism Conditions**

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- Independence – that the observer must be independent from what is being observed
  - Value-Freedom – that the choice of what and how to study is determined by objective criteria
  - Causality – that the aim is to identify explanations and fundamental laws explaining regularities in human social behaviour
  - Hypotheses and deduction – that science proceeds through a process of hypothesising fundamental laws and deducing what kinds of observation will demonstrate truth or falsity of hypotheses
  - Operational – that concepts need to be operationalised in a way which enables facts to be measured quantitatively
  - Reductionism – that problems as a whole are better understood if reduced to simpler elements
  - Generalisation – in order to generalise about regularities, it is necessary to select samples of sufficient size from which we can draw inference about the wider population
- 
- Cross-sectional – that regularities are most easily identified by making comparisons of variations across samples
-

### **7.2.3.2 Positivism versus Social Constructivism**

As noted earlier and explored in Project 1, social constructivism is in essence a reaction to the application of positivism, a view that reality is neither objective nor external, but rather socially constructed and given meaning by people.

Social constructivism focuses on ways in which people make sense of the world, especially through sharing their experiences with others through the medium of language. As such it belongs to the group of approaches described by Habermas (1970) as interpretive, as opposed to the deductive approach of positivism.

As noted by Easterby-Smith et al, it follows that social constructivism seeks to appreciate different constructions and meanings that people place upon their experiences.

The focus becomes one of what people say individually and collectively, what they think and feel, and how they communicate with each other.

So, what concepts do we need to be aware of, and what tensions do we need to take into consideration. Easterby-Smith et al note the tension of Universal Theory against Local Knowledge, which they relate to Verification, Falsification and Validity.

### **7.2.3.3 Universal Theory or Local Knowledge**

Adopting a positivist approach posits a requirement of universal applicability for knowledge to be useful.

Conversely, the constructivist approach assumes that attempts to develop generalised theories may result in frameworks that may be inappropriately applied, and rather that social theories should be understood in relation to the context from which they are derived.

Easterby-Smith et al make two further cases for local rather than universal knowledge. Firstly, that practical knowledge used by managers is learnt through engaging in practise, and is therefore contextually led (Cook and Brown, 1999).

Secondly, that managerial behaviour is culturally relative, both through national and organisational culture. It follows that any formulation of ideas needs to give due consideration to the separation across cultures, with no crossing of cultural divides.

#### **7.2.3.4 Verification or Falsification and the notion of Validity**

Karl Popper (1959) noted the distinction between verification and falsification when discussing the philosophical problem that despite the extent of supportive data to a hypotheses, a point of conclusive truth is never reached.

Popper's suggestion was to look rather for contrary evidence, evidence that disproves the hypotheses, on the basis that a single instance of refutation will falsify a theory.

This leads us to the notion of validity, namely that social research must stand up to external scrutiny. As noted by Kirk and Miller (1986), the language of validity and reliability was originally developed for use in quantitative social science, but the notions are now used more widely, with different implications depending on viewpoint.

A positivist viewpoint would undertake the following considerations.

**Table 23 Positivist Considerations**

<b>Positivist Considerations</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Validity – Do the measures correspond closely to reality?</li><li>• Reliability – Will the measures yield the same results on differing occasions?</li><li>• Generalisation – To what extent does the study confirm or contradict existing findings in the same field?</li></ul>

Whereas a constructivist viewpoint would have differing considerations:

**Table 24 Constructivist Considerations**

<b>Constructivist Considerations</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Validity – Does the study gain access to the experiences of those in the research setting?</li> <li>• Reliability – Is there transparency in the way in which sense is made from raw data?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generalisation – Do the concepts and constructs derived from this study have relevance to other settings?</li> </ul>

According to Easterby-Smith et al, there are three noted types of validity, namely construct validity; internal validity; and external validity, as shown in the following table.

**Table 25 Typology of Validity**

<b>Type of Validity</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Construct Validity</b>	<p>Are the instruments an accurate representation or measure of reality?</p> <p>It is the search for measures of sound scientific construct, and addresses the notion that a measure derived of a concept should really reflect that concept.</p>
<b>Internal Validity</b>	<p>Does the research design eliminate bias and the effect of extraneous variables? It also relates to the issue of causality and relationship.</p>
<b>External Validity</b>	<p>Defining domains over which the constructs under investigation are generalisable, and whether results may be generalisable across different settings.</p>

Bryman (2004 : p2-4) in his book Social Research Methods notes a further dimension, namely Ecological Validity, which addresses the notion that findings should be applicable to peoples every day settings.

Bryman (2004, p 74-81) often describes by the work of Cicourel (1982), noting that we need instruments that can capture the richness of daily working life, of our values and attitudes, and our knowledge.

Traditionally, quantitative methodologies have been aligned with positivism, whilst qualitative methodologies are aligned with more interpretive constructivist approaches.

When considering validity, each methodological approach has advantages and disadvantages. Whilst qualitative research is deemed to produce a richer understanding of concept and context, it is also deemed to be limited in generalisability and wider applicability.

Similarly, whilst quantitative research is considered to be a more scientific approach, it lacks the depth of exploration allowed by qualitative research.

An initial response to this was the Cross-Sectional design, which entailed the collection of data on more than one case but at a single point in time, in order to collect a body of quantitative or qualitative data in connection with a range of variables which are then examined to detect patterns of association.

The need to explore more than one case derives from the notion of interest in variation in pattern, in terms of people, organisations, nation states etc. which can only be explored through investigation of greater than a single case.

To enable the exploration of variation, a systematic approach and standardised methodology is required so as to provide the researcher with a consistent benchmark, implying a quantitative approach. The resultant issue is one of diminished causal exploration.

## **7.2.4 Competing Paradigms – the Challenge to Positivism**

The last two decades have seen a debate surrounding this Positivist-quantitative versus Constructivist-qualitative divide, otherwise described as the hard-soft science divide.

Those methodologies favouring the quantitative approach find their basis in Empiricism, the theory that knowledge is derived from experience. This evolved into a Positivist perspective, with its emphasis on objectivity, scientific method, neutrality and causal theory.

Empiricists often refer to Popper (1961), who posited that science is merely a process of accepting hypotheses that tests confirm, and rejecting hypotheses that tests fail, in essence an evolutionary process.

However, there have been challenges to Positivism such as Greene (1994, in Bryman, 2004 p530), who described the principles as having been “debunked” and “overthrown”.

Such challenge, however, is not only a recent occurrence. Habermas (1968) noted the issue of conventionalism, and the problematic issue of connecting statements of scientific observation with statements of theory.

Kuhn (1962) described what has become known as a Kuhnian Crisis, noting that knowledge not only develops in an incremental fashion, but also in fundamental leaps, often when one prevailing paradigm is challenged by emerging findings, which may force researchers to posit secondary hypotheses.

Feyerabend (1979) noted that the acceptance of empirical findings depends on power, not truth, and that scientific methodology exists with a range of other methodologies.

Similar findings were put forward by Lakatos (1970: p89), who posited that there is a resistance to the refutation of science until “*a case against mainstream theory becomes irresistible*”, in essence the Kuhnian crisis described above.

Further, Gubrium and Holstein (1997), as quoted in Myers (2001, p101) stated that “*quantitative standards alone cannot reflect the experiential quality of described events*”. No longer could statistics alone demonstrate truth and understanding.

This challenge of constructivism to positivism has seen a similar challenge in qualitative versus quantitative methodologies, as follows.

## **7.2.5 Quantitative or Qualitative Methodology**

Quantitative Research has become seen as a central methodology adopted by those favouring the Positivist approach, whilst Qualitative Research has similarly become the favoured approach of Social Constructivists. These apparently opposing methodologies are described and contrasted below.

### **7.2.5.1 Qualitative Research**

Qualitative research broadly describes studies of a social and informal nature that seek to explore participants concepts, motivations, behaviours, attitudes, relationships, and broad understanding of the context in which they operate.

Those who adopt a positivist approach therefore often use as a starting point an exploration of such matters before moving to postulating notions of broader behaviour. Qualitative methodologists would argue, therefore, that this approach to research would bear closer resemblance to the requirements of management studies than quantitative research, being what they would describe an inherently contextual and human activity.

Qualitative research, as described in Project 1, therefore broadly utilises less structured instruments, which as a result are more flexible, to develop a contextual understanding of participant understanding of concepts, attitudes and behaviours.

As a result, the methodology tends to use smaller sample sizes in a more intensive fashion to produce a richer, though subjective, analysis. This carries the implication of high contextualisation, and therefore lower validity across a broader audience.

### **7.2.5.2 Quantitative Research**

Quantitative research owes its origin to scientific methodology, and has long been a preferred approach in the academic and scientific community given the high level of validity associated to its inherent process. The key considerations here are often described as objectivity, systematic approach and validity. Indeed, quantitative approaches often apply statistical techniques in a systematic process to test reliability of concept, construct, inference, causality and validity.

The methodology offers a systematic and structured approach that can test contextual models across a wider audience, and indeed allow predictions of a causal nature between groups of like individuals with measurable outcomes, and results which can be tested for reliability.

Black (1999) presented a set of attributes for quantitative research, as follows.

*“Primarily, scientific research strives to be systematic in –*

- *The use of conceptual schemes and the building of theories, while being rigorous and methodical, with concepts being carefully defined, and theoretical structures checked for logical consistency;*
- *Testing these and the resulting hypotheses empirically – in other words, structuring a study to collect data that will, by design, provide supporting or refuting evidence for proposed relationships;*



- *Restricting itself to descriptions among isolatable variables, controlling all other possible variables that might influence an outcome through representative evidence sampling;*
- *Devising self-checking mechanisms to ensure replicability of a study, avoiding the use of fortuitous evidence in favour of representative phenomena that can be reproduced;*
- *Avoiding metaphysical explanations, those that cannot be tested, including those based on religious belief – which does not mean they are rejected, only that they are not sufficient explanations, equivalent to untested hypotheses.”*  
(Black, 1999, 20).

## 7.2.6 Quantitative Research versus Qualitative Research

The above description demonstrates a number of inherent differences between the methodologies of quantitative and qualitative research.

These were summarised in Myers (2001), and shown in the table below, adapted from that research.

**Table 26 Quantitative versus Qualitative Research**

<b>Quantitative Research</b>	<b>Qualitative Research</b>
Measure Objective Facts	Construct Social and Cultural Reality
Focus on Variables	Focus on Activities, Processes and Events
Reliability is key	Authenticity is key
Value Free	Values present and explicit
Independent of context	Constrained by context
Many cases, subjects	Few cases, subjects
Statistical Analysis	Thematic Analysis
Researcher is detached	Researcher is involved

As previously described, the qualitative approach was therefore deemed most appropriate to Project 1, where the object was to seek a contextual understanding of a small sample of individuals perceptions of leadership and associated concepts in

particular local authority, all be it as a precursor to further research which would later seek to address issues of validity.

The second phase, Projects 2 and 3, of this research seeks to test the leadership framework and its associated concepts derived in Project 1, and test their validity with a much broader audience. Quantitative research appears to offer such outcomes, allowing the testing of prior findings across the audience of local government Cabinet Teams in England.

However, as we have seen, there are inherent tensions between the two. The question is raised as to whether both paradigms, Constructivism (and associated qualitative techniques) and Positivism (and associated quantitative techniques) are able to be adopted and applied in a single study, namely adopting a Two Phase approach.

### **7.2.7 Two Phase or Multi Strategy Research Methodologies**

Byrne & Olsen (2004, p2-4) addressed the quantitative – qualitative divide, noting *“while there are many differences between the two research strategies, there are many examples of research which transcend that distinction”*.

He suggests that the connection between epistemology and ontology may be at best thought of as tendencies rather than definite connections, that they are not wholly deterministic. This leads to the notion of the multi-strategy research approach, one where instruments are drawn from different research strategies to reduce the subjectivity and lack of generalisability associated with qualitative research, and THE perceived lack of depths associated with quantitative research.

The central argument posited against the multi-strategy approach is as follows. Firstly, the notions that research methods carry with them ontological and epistemological commitments, for example beliefs about how the world is viewed, and therefore how information is captured. This has extended to consider qualitative and quantitative research as two distinct paradigms.

So, what are the lines of debate? The epistemological version follows the embedded methods argument, that quantitative and qualitative research are both grounded in different paradigms, and work from incompatible epistemological principles.

However, there is a more pragmatic, technical version which gives prominence to the strengths of data collection and data analysis techniques, whilst recognising the distinct epistemological assumptions. This version sees research strategies as not only compatible, but also feasible and desirable.

For this research, the question becomes one of whether there is discussion in literature of where qualitative research informs quantitative research. Bryman (2004, p451) notes two such occasions.

Firstly, qualitative research can inform quantitative research through the provision of hypotheses. The tendency of qualitative research to employ an unstructured, open-ended approach to data collection is deemed helpful as a source of hypotheses for testing.

Secondly, and of more direct consequence to our research, the in-depth knowledge of social construct and context acquired through qualitative research can be used to inform the design of question for survey or structured interviewing.

The multi-strategy approach means that the researcher no longer has to rely on either qualitative or quantitative techniques, but rather can buttress findings with methods drawn from other research strategies. It is based on the premise that all research strategies have something to offer, and that a congruence of substantive findings from a diversity of methods will be inherently more able stand greater external scrutiny.

As described by Bryman (2004, p456 – 458)), a degree of quantification from qualitative results can often uncover both generality and relative importance of themes.

Willmott (1995) describes the possibility of integrating paradigms to allow different methodologies with an aim to the synthesis producing greater validity and reliability.

Similarly, Schultz and Hatch (1996) suggest that “crossing” paradigms may create a research structure that capitalises on the strengths of differing methodologies.

The next section outlines a number of cases where such multi-strategy research approaches have been utilised.

Examples of Two Phase Methodologies follow.

#### **7.2.7.1 Example - Face-Validation of a Visioning Ability Scale**

The paper by Thoms and Blasko (1999, p105) describes the development of a scale intended to explore visioning ability. The instrument was designed as a self-rating questionnaire involving 18 separate statements utilising a 5-point Likert scale.

Having derived the range of constructs from literature and qualitative interview, two groups of respondents are requested to give feedback as to relevance of construct and language. The first group is comprised of students, the second of practising managers from the business world.

The second phase involves statistical analysis of the inter-correlations of the scaled responses.

#### **7.2.7.2 Example 2 - National Survey, Sexual Attitudes**

Pope and Mays (1995) utilised perceptions from semi-structured interviews on sexual attitude and lifestyle to explore appropriate concept and language prior to a UK National Survey on the topic, finding that the concepts as originally described were not appropriate or widely understood.

#### **7.2.7.3 Example 3 – British Household Panel Survey (BHPS)**

Laurie and Sullivan (1991) described the first wave of data collection for the BHPS was through qualitative research (a combination of in-depth interview and group

discussion) to clarify terminology and concept, and to aid in the development of a questionnaire suitable for wider survey.

#### **7.2.7.4 Example 4 – Myers (2001) Benchmark Study and Analytical Framework Applying Demography Theory to Research on NHS Trusts' Top Management Teams in Times of Change**

Andrew Myers (2001) used a two phase approach in the above named study, utilising qualitative research to explore conceptual and understanding of the impact of demographics in Top Teams of the NHS with a small sample. Myers then took a pre-validated questionnaire (the Kakabadse, 1999, instrument discussed and utilised in this paper), which he amended in light of the qualitative research to create a questionnaire adapted for context.

The research then moved to a quantitative approach, applying a range of statistical techniques to achieve validation of the contextualised instruments, and reliability of results and causal relationships across a broader audience.

This research, producing as it did a valid instrument for Top Team enquiry within the context of the NHS, together with a range of factors with showing high levels of significance on performance of the organisation, tested for reliability, has clearly informed the structure of my own research, and the validity of using a two phase approach, utilising qualitative and then quantitative methodologies

.

#### **7.2.8 The notion of Triangulation**

The notion of triangulation is based on the assumption that any bias inherent in particular data sources, investigation or method would be neutralised when undertaken in conjunction with other data source enquiries.

Triangulation may take a variety of forms. It may be of theory – using methods from one discipline to explore situations in another; of data – collecting data from different time frames or sources; of investigator – different people collect data in the same situation; of method – collecting data through different methods but from the same

paradigm; or of methodology – collecting data through different methods from differing paradigms.

Greene (1994, p530) gave a number of arguments for data triangulation, noting convergence of results; that complimentary facets may emerge; developmental possibilities– that the first method helps inform the second; initiation – that contradictions and fresh perspectives emerge; and the ability for adding breadth and scope to the study.

As can be seen from the discussion above, the notions of the multi-strategy approach and triangulation are linked.

Approaches to triangulation include dominant-less dominant (using qualitative and quantitative methodologies, relying on one more heavily than another); separate reporting (keeping results from each section distinct); mixed methodology (where both qualitative and quantitative methodologies are used throughout); and two phase (using quantitative and qualitative, where one phase informs the other).

As described by Creswell (2003, p208), there are a number of advantages to adopting a two phase design, as it allows the combination of methods to better understand concepts being tested or explored, and with greater resultant validity.

### **7.2.9 Implications for Theoretical Positioning and Research Methodology**

As noted at the outset, the purpose of this chapter was to review literature with two objectives in mind. Firstly, to explore the tensions of utilising a two phase approach within the DBA thesis, and secondly to explore implications resulting from these tensions in terms of designing and validating a suitable instrument for further exploration in Project 3.

As we have seen, although debate continues as to the use of multi-strategy research approaches, one side of the debate promotes a pragmatic approach to research in the aim of providing greater exploration of associations and construct, whilst delivering a higher degree of validity.

As such, our proposed structure of undertaking a qualitative study, and using the resultant conceptual framework and language to inform a wider study becomes not only possible, but also valuable in terms of data triangulation and validity. Further, similar examples of research have been noted and described which follow similar research strategies.

Taking a pragmatic perspective, my proposal involves an invitation for every Chief Executive and Leader of a Local Authority in England to participate. The total number of Local Authorities in England is 388, creating a sample size of 776.

The notion of arranging and holding qualitative, semi-structured interviews for that number, or even for a fifteen percent participation rate, would be impractical and expensive, both in time and cost terms.

Further elements for consideration are those of reliability and replicability, previously mentioned. It is hoped that other academic researchers may wish to use this study as either a benchmark or a starting point for further study, so a level of reliability is an important outcome.

Such reliability and validity is also important as it is hoped this research will have an impact on the development of practice.

Hence, quantitative results are more likely to achieve the outcomes required, and a two stage methodology becomes not only a theoretical option, but also a pragmatic necessity.

## **7.3 Research Methodology**

### **7.3.1 Research Design & Approach**

As noted, the purpose of Project 2 has been defined as the production and validation of a suitable instrument for exploring wider relevance of the constructs and associated relations of the conceptual model derived in Project 1.

From literature, we have noted the existence of an already validated instrument utilised to explore constructs derived from the same underpinning guiding theory, namely the Kakabadse instrument developed from Top Team research.

Hence, our objective is to amend, expand and achieve face validation of such an instrument.

### **7.3.2 Philosophical Considerations**

The proposal for the DBA is to use a two-phase approach, using the conceptual model drawn from qualitative interviews and a constructivist position, to inform a quantitative study. The purpose of the latter is to explore associations and relevancy of concept across differing settings and to a wider audience, whilst improving validity of the results through data triangulation. There is an acceptance that the process may also highlight previously unforeseen concepts or relationships.

The use of a survey and resultant quantitative analysis at face value suggests a positivist stance with associated positions of an objective external reality. However, as described in literature, I would rather adopt a pragmatic approach to mixed-strategy research, namely drawing on those elements of methodology that enhance my original findings.



In essence, the viewpoint of reality is still one of a subjective socially-constructed reality, but I seek to utilise a quantitative survey methodology not to explore causality, but rather to explore association and relevance.

### **7.3.3 Practical Considerations**

In questionnaire design, we must be aware of a number of considerations as outlined from literature to address some of the inherent tensions of utilising a mixed strategy methodology.

- The earlier conceptual model derived from the qualitative study should directly inform the questionnaire design
- Constructs must pay attention to local context, and not cross cultural divides. Hence, we need to ensure that if the survey is employed across a range of authority types, rather than just the Unitary Authority, that we are explicit through demographics about classification for further analysis.
- As the view of reality is still one of social construction, validation of language for the questionnaire is of critical importance
- In no sense should the survey explore causality
- The questionnaire should allow some sense of preference, or strength of feeling, suggesting a scaled response
- Any face or initial validation must involve individuals who inhabit the context

#### **7.3.3.1 Considerations in Questionnaire Design**

According to Oppenheim (2001, p100), the following points need to be considered when developing a questionnaire.

Firstly, the type of question – is it a question of fact (such as a demographic) or a question of opinion? Is the question open or closed (yes/no or scaled)?

Further, Oppenheim (2001 : p119) sets out a set of Principles: that the questionnaire should be clear; Jargon is to be avoided, as are personal questions; one should avoid a single question that explores two items; leading questions should be avoided.

Regarding the layout of the questionnaire, one should provide a covering letter explaining the purpose of research; include instructions as to completion; one should start with factual questions, before moving to questions of opinion,

Bryman (2004, p545) also raises the issue of Validity, which he refers to a question of how far we can be sure that an instrument measures the attributes it is supposed to measure or explore. The notion of face validity, explored in the Chapter detailing theoretical positioning, here refers to whether or not the instrument and its items are plausible to the relevant population.

### **7.3.4 Choice of Respondents**

The selection of a limited panel of experts to support the iterative process of face validation of the questionnaire necessitated individuals with understanding of three distinct areas.

The first area (Group 1 experts) explores Leadership requirements and context of local government from the perspective of the Cabinet Member

The second area (Group 2) explores Leadership requirements and context of local government from the perspective of the Cabinet Officer.

Finally, the third area (Group 3) explores the existing research utilising the Kakabadse instrument (methodology, validated scales and questionnaires)

This necessitated the following participant selections.

For Group 1, requiring expert knowledge of the Cabinet Member role, the participants were the four lead member peers of the Improvement and Development Agency (I&DeA) with a responsibility for improvement of local government through the political leadership of local authorities, all also occupying senior councillor roles within local authorities in their own right

Group 2, requiring expert knowledge of the Cabinet Officers' role, the participants were the Director of the I&DeA with responsibility for the leadership competence development of officers (and members) across UK; the Director of Local Government Improvement at the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) with responsibility for the leadership competence development of officers (and members) across Wales; and the Director of Improvement at AGMA (Association of Greater Manchester Authorities) with responsibility for the leadership competence development of officers (and members) across the Manchester region.

For Group 3, experts with knowledge of the Kakabadse Framework, the participants were Professor Andrew Kakabadse and Professor Nada Korac-Kakabadse.

### **7.3.5 Proposed Process**

The process of moving to a face validated questionnaire involves a number of stages, proposed as follows:

- Stage 1: Collation and adaptation of existing Instruments
- Stage 2: Addition of further (un-validated) scales derived from Project 1
- Stage 3: An iterative review of the emerging instrument with Group 3
- Stage 4: Face validation of emergent instrument with Groups 1 & 2, & appropriate amendment
- Stage 5: Further iterative review with Group 3, with relevant amendments
- Stage 6: Final Face Validation with Groups 1, 2 & 3

## **7.4 Summary**

The research approach and methodology have now been defined.

## **7.5 Describing the Process**

### **7.5.1 Introduction**

As described in methodology, the research was separated into a number of distinct stages, each of which is described below.

### **7.5.2 Learning from Project 1 – A summary of emerging concepts**

The emerging conceptual framework is categorised into four distinct areas, namely background, role, context and capabilities, with resultant learning and associated concepts for exploration being summarised below.

As a general point, there were differences in language noted between that used in the literature and respondents to the study. For example, the terms transactional and transformational leadership were not widely used or understood, though other terminology was used, or described.

Further, there were language differences between officers and members. For example, members tend to describe operational or implementation aspects of the Council as service delivery.

It should be noted that the original conceptual framework drawn from literature used Top Team theory (Kakabadse & Kakabadse, 1999) as its core guiding theory, and as such the results are structured around similar concepts, summarised as follows.

### **7.5.2.1 Background**

- Traditional descriptions of training, work experience and cultural exposure
- Training described as academic, professional or “on the job”
- Work experience described as managerial, professional or “broad”
- Perception that long experience of public sector was valued

### **7.5.2.2 Role**

- The notion of discretion within role
- Prevalence of Multiplicity of role
- Functional level - described in respondents language as managerial or strategic, operational and bureaucratic
- Difference in perception of role of Cabinet member – Officer description of Cabinet Member’s role as purely strategic, Members description as strategic and operational
- Possible driver for difference of perception of role – political (electoral) timescales for delivery
- Issue for Cabinet Members – Working style / hours of work / salary – salary of Cabinet Member is in essence part time – perception that this hinders ability to participate effectively

### **7.5.2.3 Context**

- A distinction was drawn between strategic thinking (understanding the “big picture”) and corporate working (the joint action of a team to deliver organisational outcomes)
- Operational issues – budgetary constraints, capacity deficits in both human and time terms, and other issues of surrounding ability to deliver to customers needs and satisfaction
- Top Team issues – referred to often as the Cabinet Team or “Team RCT”
  - Membership / Constitution of Top Team – differences of opinion – is it a team of members and officers, one group rather than another, the political group, or a group of specific individuals holding power ?
  - Cohesion of Top Team
  - Cohesion of Vision
  - Openness of dialogue / ability to raise sensitive issues
- Political Drivers –
  - Delivery of agendas / manifestos within electoral timescales
  - Necessity for political will and commitment
  - Political management of stakeholders
  - The Group – it’s role, processes and power

#### **7.5.2.4 Capabilities**

These in essence reflected those explored through the framework described in the Top Team research undertaken by Kakabadse and Kakabadse (1999) and later related studies, surrounding:

- Character – judgement, determination, humour, understanding
- Relationship based capabilities – communication (including listening), interaction, nurturing and development, convincing
- Personal capabilities – strategic, political sensitivity and understanding, managerial skills, sustaining change

## **7.6 *Process and Results***

### **7.6.1 Stage 1 - Collation and adaptation of existing Instruments**

#### **7.6.1.1 Collation of Existing Instruments**

As described in Project 1 and noted above, the Kakabadse & Kakabadse work surrounding Top Team theory formed the guiding theoretical framework from which this work derives. As such, a range of validated scales and instruments already exist, and it is the most recent of these that form the starting point for the development of the questionnaire proposed for usage in Project 3.

At the time of writing, the scales attached at Appendix 3 reflect the most current listing of validated scales. Similarly, a copy of a questionnaire that has already been validated is attached at Appendix 4.

As noted, there is on face value a high degree of congruence between the concepts explored in the existing instruments, and the concepts drawn from the theoretical framework described in above.

Specific reference is made to scales exploring Demographic information, the Top Team, Leadership performance, Strategic Leadership, Working Relationships, Role, Expertise, Top Team cohesiveness, Discretion, Communication, Customer Focus, Discipline, Decision Making, and Culture.

Each of these relates directly to areas of the conceptual framework drawn from project 1, and as such warrant inclusion.

Other scales, such as those relating to outsourcing, Strategic use of IT, Process Expectations, and Career Success were not seen as relevant to the focus of this study, and therefore withdrawn.

### **7.6.1.2 Adaptation of Existing Instruments**

Having compiled a set of suggested “relevant” scales, there was a necessity to make a number of adaptations surrounding around language and context, based on a number of principles.

Firstly, references to “Top Team”, the “Senior Management Team”, and “the Board” were amended to use the phrase “Cabinet Team”, “Cabinet Member” or “Cabinet Officer” – drawn directly from respondent’s language, as appropriate.

The notion of “product” was amended to “service”; “the business” to altered to “the organisation” (to reflect language used consistently throughout the validated scales); references to “clients” were amended to “customers”, and similarly “business focus” amended to “customer focus”

Amendments were similarly made to Background information and demographic data requirements: the notion of Seniority of Roles was made relevant to the context of the Local Authority, i.e. Leader, Deputy Leader, Cabinet Member, Chief Executive, Director.

Also, the Main Products / Services Section was re-titled “Services”, with a classification relevant to Local Authority

### **7.6.2 Stage 2 - Addition of further (un-validated) scales derived from Project 1**

The resultant amended questionnaire was then reviewed to identify potential omissions in terms of concepts requiring investigation.

As a result, the following sections were included.

Firstly, issues relating to Role, sub-divided into those relating to those issues effecting both Members and Officers, exploring notions of time spent on strategic / operational



/ bureaucratic time and work-life balance; and those effecting Cabinet Members only – exploring political drivers, and whether salary is a barrier to greater effectiveness. Questions relating to the Political Group emerged as an area worthy of exploration—its role, processes, power structures, manifestos, vision and impact.

Similarly, issues relating to relationships between members and officers – ability to raise sensitive issues; shared agendas; the notion that “members lead, officers implement”; Competence and capacity issues

Also, the notion of the Cabinet Team and its constitution in terms of membership can be seen to have import. In my own construction of the reality of local government Top Team leadership, the top Team is that point where members (the Cabinet or alternative) and officers (Senior Management Team) come together as a whole, but with a subtext allowing differing roles and responsibilities.

The joining of these two separate teams to form a single team never happens formally, yet the joint legitimacy of leadership suggests that even though there is no formal structure or membership, the team may exist as a coming together of minds and agendas. My contention would be that if individuals felt a stronger affinity to, and membership of, such a team, this would exert a strong influence on leadership performance.

Hence, any research must focus on leadership performance, as we must seek not only those constructs that form individual elements of peoples perceptions and understanding of leadership in local government, but also what relationship those constructs have on successful leadership, or leadership performance as described and operationalised in the Kakabadse and Kakabadse (1999) studies.

### **7.6.3 Stage 3 - An iterative review of the emerging instrument with Group 3**

Having compiled, adapted and added to the existing instruments, the next stage of the process involved an iterative process of review, testing of assumptions and

amendment to achieve a degree of validation with the Group 3 experts, namely Professor Andrew Kakabadse and Professor Nada Korac-Kakabadse.

As a result, a number of following amendments / additions were made.

When exploring the Cabinet Team composition, the question is expanded to include a notion of active participation in decision making to reflect the fact that individuals may feel they attend a meeting, but aren't part of a team.

“Bureaucratic time” is split into formal processes and civic engagements, to explore role differences.

The question surrounding “grasping new issues and putting to good effect” is split as they are two separate issues.

There was also a need for a variety of amendments based on grammar and language.

#### **7.6.4 Stage 4 - Face validation of emergent instrument with Groups 1 & 2, with review and appropriate amendment**

Following the iterative amendments, the questionnaire was circulated to the participants of Groups 1 and 2 for feedback and comment.

The feedback received was as follows, together with my initial responses.

1. “I think it’s a really interesting questionnaire, and will produce some fascinating insights and results, particularly when you look at officer answers compared to member answers”
2. “In general, I really like the statements you use. They are easy to grasp and will generate some interesting results. I can’t suggest any changes”

3. There is a need to test the definition of Cabinet Team – not everyone will agree with it – *introduction now amended, and concept reflected in question on background section*
4. Need to explain what reverse scale is – not everyone will understand it – *explanation in introduction*
5. In terms of the size of authority question, all primary tier authorities in England will have more than 5000 staff, so perhaps use 5-8k, 8-10k, 10k-15k, 15k plus – *I accept the point, though my intention is to forward this to authorities who have Cabinet models throughout Wales and England. This will include district councils who do have a much smaller staff complement, some numbering only a few hundred. Scale amended according to both these points.*
6. Do you need a type of authority question to distinguish between district, county, unitary and city councils? – *accepted, section added in background*
7. In terms of classification of service category, rather than social services, put social care and health, and remember education and children services – *accepted and amended*
8. The questionnaire may be more difficult to fill in if it is a hung council or multi party Cabinet – address this with some explanation about how they should respond if this is the case – *The research focuses on context, competence and role – all members taking part will be Cabinet members, and it is these issues that are to be explored rather than general political structure – I have amended the introduction to reflect this.*
9. The questions are focused on the service delivery and internal leadership roles – perhaps you should include something to cover Community Leadership and Working in Partnership – *Whilst the point is both interesting and currently relevant, my research focus is on Top Team leadership dynamics internal to the organisation, so no amendment*

10. You talk about Cabinet teams in Organisations – perhaps “Authorities” would be better – *Accepted and amended*
11. Should you get a sense through background of whether the council is single party or hung? – *the introduction has been amended*
12. Is there a purpose in seeing how those not in control or backbenchers see things? - *my research focus is on Top Team leadership dynamics internal to the organisation, so no amendment*
13. The section on working in groups may be obscured if there is no single party control - *The research focuses on context, competence and role – all members taking part will be Cabinet members, and it is these issues that are to be explored rather than general political structure – I have amended the introduction to reflect this.*
14. What about 4<sup>th</sup> option governance models – i.e. where there is still a committee system? - *my research focus is on Top Team leadership dynamics in authorities who have adopted the cabinet model of governance only, so no amendment*
15. The questionnaire digs quite deeply on “what” the situation is but not why – do you need to probe this? – *The research acknowledges the importance of context, placing it at the heart of the conceptual framework. The details of “why” would encompass a domain outside the remit of study.*
16. You could ask about profile and accountability – who takes responsibility when things go wrong? – *A useful indicator of how far members and officers feel responsibility as part of their role – Added Question 6, Section related to Role – members and Officers*
17. You could ask about serious internal political challenge – how safe is your job? – *I feel that whilst the issue raised would be contextual in nature, and have effect on both the working of the Group and perhaps the degree of risk undertaken by the*

*Councillors, this relates more to political group dynamics rather than Top Team dynamics- no amendment*

18. You could ask about how well informed people are – how well do they know their brief? - *Accepted, question 8 added in Communication section*
19. It may be interesting to ask how often people spend time in each others company? – *this question is useful if it relates to the cohesiveness of the Top Team, and the production of relevant outcomes – question 7 added to Section related to Cohesive Top Team.*

#### **7.6.5 Stage 5 – Further review with Group 3 and appropriate amendment**

Having amended the questionnaire in light of responses from groups 1 & 2, the amended questionnaire was then shared again with Group 3 experts, with a number of outcomes.

The notion of “Scale Reversed” should be for the master copy of the questionnaire only, not respondents. Also, for ease of analysis, perhaps the positive and negative questions should be separated out, if appropriate – *accepted*

The point surrounding hung / majority control – rather than describe this as part of context in the introduction, it could be included as part of the demographics section to allow a greater depth of analysis - *accepted*

Following these discussions, a new version of the questionnaire was produced.

#### **7.6.6 Stage 6 – Final Face Validation with Groups 1, 2 & 3**

The version of the Questionnaire shown at Appendix 5 was re-circulated to all Groups (Groups 1, 2 & 3) for further comment. No further amendment was received from any respondents.

As such, the Questionnaire as shown at Appendix 5 became the adopted Final Questionnaire for utilisation with the survey proposed for Project 3.

## ***7.7 Contribution to Knowledge (Theory and Praxis)***

### **7.7.1 Contribution to Academic Knowledge**

Project 2 has utilised an iterative approach to develop a questionnaire based upon the existing and already validated Kakabadse Questionnaire utilised for exploring Top Teams in the context of local government. This questionnaire has reached a level of face validity in terms of both existing scales (although amended for contextual language) and emergent scales surrounding the political group and the differential roles of officers and members.

This iterative approach has been utilised much within qualitative research, especially with a view to utilising expert groups to achieve face validity of a questionnaire (Myers, 2001). This has demonstrated a degree of success in this research also.

Particularly useful was the triangulation of perceptions of the three separate expert groups, as suggested by professor Kakabadse.

Implicitly, it has therefore demonstrated that the conceptual framework derived from the qualitative study in Project 1 has a wider acknowledgement in terms of the understanding of the constituent constructs.

### **7.7.2 Contribution to Practitioner Knowledge**

The notion of the Cabinet (or other) Team has been highlighted as an important issue in the context of local government. This refers explicitly to the divergence of viewpoint described in Project 1 surrounding the composition of the Top Team for the local authority.

This debate centres on the existence, or otherwise, of a group including both members of the Cabinet itself and officers of the Senior Management Team.

The discussion originates at the prescribed roles of the Cabinet and Senior Management Teams, both of which are formal elements of a council structure.

You will recall that members hold responsibility for deciding policy direction, supported by officers; that officers have sole responsibility for operational matters; and that there is a joint responsibility for members and officers to decide strategy, creating a shared responsibility for strategic leadership.

My postulation therefore stems from this point, and suggests that the Top Team here is therefore that point where members of Cabinet and officers from the Senior Management Team join together to form a single team, even though it is not defined in structure or legislation.

Further, that it is at that level of the team for which the concepts of strategic leadership, role, cohesion, competence, background et al hold great importance. This mirrors the concepts held within Upper Echelon Theory (Hambrick and Mason, 1984) relating to role, background and demographics; and Top Team Theory (Kakabadse and Kakabadse, 1999) who describe role, strategic vision capability and cohesion.

Also, that the perception of membership of that team by an individual, (and their job satisfaction in that role (Myers, 2001), become central issues in exploring or predicting leadership performance.

### **7.7.3 Personal Learning**

The previous chapter outlined a process undertaken for developing and face validating a questionnaire. Importantly, it involved discussion of a survey instrument with both academics and practitioners. At one level, it was interesting to note the degree of similarity between responses, in terms of both content and language.

More significantly, it highlighted the fact that things that may not seem a factor within my experience, and hence not feature in my assumptions, did feature in feedback from



both academics and practitioners. A concrete example of this was the necessity of exploring the impact of political context – is the council in majority control or hung?

As the Council I led was of outright control, my assumption was that informal associations were made to achieve control of a similar nature. Whilst this may be true in some cases, feedback demonstrates there may be other impacts.

The key lesson for me is to explore more fully others perceptions, beyond the point where my own conclusions lie.

## **7.8 *Next Steps***

### **7.8.1 Research Proposal for Project 3**

Project 3 involves the utilisation in a wider survey of the Face Validated Questionnaire developed through the methodology utilised in Project 2 to gain an insight into variations of perception around the concepts and learning from Project 1.

The intention is to obtain a sample of cabinet members and officers from authorities throughout the UK to explore conceptual strength in a variety of authority types (County, Unitary, District, City etc) and with differing political contexts (hung council, majority council etc)

The resultant data will be analysed using a quantitative methodology. Obviously this is a highly positivist approach, and consequently there may be resultant tensions produced that may potentially be of further interest.

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## **PROJECT 3**

2007

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Top Team Leadership in Local Government

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## **ABSTRACT**

Project3 represents an exploration of the understanding of Leaders and Chief Executives of Local Authorities in England of the constructs having sole or joint influence on leadership performance. The research takes Top Team Theory and Upper Echelon Theory as its guiding framework.

Prior research (Project 1) involved a constructivist approach to exploring leadership constructs within a top team in a single authority via a series of semi-structured interviews.

In turn, this informed the adaptation of the already validated instrument (a questionnaire) for exploring Top Team Leadership Dynamics utilised by Kakabadse and Kakabadse (1999) for usage within the local government context, and achievement of face validity of the adapted instrument (Project 2).

This element (Project 3) of research seeks to explore wider validity of the adapted questionnaire via a survey of all Leaders and Chief Executives of Local Authorities in England. A Popperian and Positivist approach is taken to analysing the results to confirm wider validity of the survey instrument.

Further, the research seeks to gain insight into the adaptability and relevance of the leadership framework and constructs previously described (in Projects 1 and 2) across a broader audience.



## **8 Project 3 – A Search for Validity and Significance**

### **8.1 OVERVIEW – Leadership Literature and This Research**

#### **8.1.1 Leadership in Literature**

##### **8.1.1.1 Schools of Thought**

Leadership has for many years been a source of academic research and debate. This research has been categorised to Schools for the purposes of this study, as described in the literature review of Project 1, so the following represents a brief synopsis only.

The initial notions surrounded the Trait Theories and the Born to Lead School of Ghiselli (1963), Bass (1985), Senge (1992) and Bennis (1998), outlining a notion of particular characteristics or skills possessed by the individual, often from birth, that would enable them to be successful leaders.

The Behavioural School flowed from authors such as Likert (1961) and Mouton (1964), and concentrated on style of leadership and interaction with followers. It described styles of leaders such as autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire. Blake and Mouton (1964) went further, describing a Managerial Grid which postulated a “best” style of leadership behaviour related to typology of follower.

The Contingency Approach extended this notion, postulating that factors other than leader/follower relationships were also of importance, such as structure; situational and environmental factors; task structure; and organisational culture. These would help inform the appropriate leadership behaviour or style. Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1958) extended this to a “continuum of leadership” from boss centred leadership to subordinate centred leadership.

Rowe (2001) wrote about Strategic Leadership, describing this as “*the ability to influence others to voluntarily make day to day decisions that involve the long term viability of the organisation, whilst at the same time maintaining its short term*

*financial stability*". Selznick (1957) linked this to the concept of individuals holding concern for the evolution of the organisation as a whole.

Boal and Hooijberg (2001) described this as a "*future-oriented notion of Visionary Leadership*". Cyert and March (1963) suggested that the contingency approach, including notions of Visionary and Strategic Leadership, needed to be focused not only on the head of the organisation, but also members of the top team

The notion of a Top Team has become increasingly important in the local government sector with the onset of cabinet models of governance within a context of shared legitimacy of leadership between members and officers, specifically the Councillors who form the Cabinet and the Officers who form the Senior Management Team.

#### **8.1.1.2 Top Team Leadership**

In recent years, Top Teams have increasingly become a focus for leadership research. Specifically, the work of Kakabadse and Kakabadse (1999) on Top Teams has provided us a model with a focus on role, strategic vision, cohesion, context and capability. In this sense, capability is conceptualised as a combination of experience, judgement, aptitudes, behaviours, knowledge and skills.

Hambrick and Mason (1984) provided a model with a similar emphasis on the Top Team approach, but with its focus on demographic influences, background and role. Earlier work by Cyert and March (1963) described the notion of a dominant coalition at the top of an organisation, and comes to dominate within the areas of its activity.

For this research, it is these models that have helped form a framework for exploring top team leadership within the context of local government.



### 8.1.1.3 Demography and Top Teams

The qualitative research interviews and subsequent development of the questionnaire has led to the apparent importance of a further body of work, namely the significance of demographic factors in Top Team Theory.

As noted above, Hambrick and Mason (1984) did raise demographic factors as being of import, noting such things as tenure, functional background, education etc. as partial indicators for a range of properties related to the organisation, allowing postulations as to how, for example, decisions may be reached in organisations, and more importantly organisational performance.

Work by Child (1974) was an early instance on the impact of demographic influence, demonstrating a relationship between age and risk aversion. Later work, notably Finkelstein and Hambrick, 1990, demonstrated a link between Top Team characteristics and organisational performance. Pfeffer, 1983 (p 229-357), suggested a relationship between tenure and performance, noting that demography becomes a “vital, causal variable” that effects even organisational outcome.

Other authors have noted similar outcomes. Katz (1982) noted that longer tenure, for example, had impact on other issues, such as stability of team, reduced goal conflict and enhanced socialisation. This suggests that demographic factors do have an impact upon organisational performance, but often work through impact upon other processes to achieve said outcome.

Variations in demography have led to the emergence of Top Team descriptions as being heterogeneous or homogeneous, the level of uniqueness or similarity between members of the Top Team. Murray (1999) defined Top Team homogeneity as “*a group level index of the degree of similarity between members of a group*”.

Limited variations, namely a homogenous group, would lead to stronger socialisation and cohesion (Finkelstein and Hambrick, 1990). Larger variations, conversely, can lead to greater innovation and diversity of idea.

#### **8.1.1.4 Political Leadership**

There has been little academic research undertaken on political activity within the context of local authorities. The body of literature described here exists more within the Public Management and Public Administration schools, though connects well with the emerging school of Public Leadership models.

Early academic studies made reference to items such as the agenda setting process; exertion of power (Lukes, 1974); negotiation and conflict resolution (Dahl, 1958); the policy process (Kingdon, 1984; Lindblom, 1959; Dror, 1964); stakeholder management etc.

Later studies have expanded the debate to a view of political leadership, for example Tucker (1981), as described in Kakabadse and Kakabadse (1998) sees politics as the active direction of a political community, in essence equating to leadership.

Of importance here is the notion of the Political group – elements not described in law, guidance or constitution, but central to the activity of an authority and the role of the politician.

The sector as a whole has been dominated by a paradigm embracing rapid change, both in structure and policy; the need for increasing choice and quality at lower costs; and greater cross working, both within and external to the authority.

#### **8.1.2 Positioning this Research**

Previous elements of this research project have produced a Top Team Leadership Framework that link five specific constructs to leadership performance, namely Demographics, Role, Context, Strategic Leadership and Understanding Political Group Processes. From this framework emerged a face validated version of the

Kakabadse Survey Instrument for usage within Top Teams in the local government sector.

This stage of research seeks to explore the validity of each of these constructs within the local government context in terms of our understanding of leadership, with a view to achieving a greater knowledge of what elements constitute or influence successful leadership. It does not seek to unpick the relationship between these characteristics and performance, or use particular constructs as predictors of the same.

It utilises a survey involving all Leaders and Chief Executives of Local Authorities in England, which returned a response rate of greater than 20 percent, to establish the extent of validity of both constructs and the research instrument itself, and hence moves from the Constructivist Interpretive approach adopted in earlier elements of the research to a Positivist Popperian approach.

## **8.2 LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

### **8.2.1 The Local Government Context**

Local Government in England and Wales has been a sector at the forefront of the Central Government drive for Public Sector Reform since Tony Blair came into power in 1997.

The Modernisation Agenda was introduced in 2000, which led to new models of governance in local authorities, creating an imperative for a smaller number of elected Councillors to take an Executive Role within the authority, and work with the Senior Officers to decide the strategic direction of an authority for the term of the administration.

### **8.2.2 The Local Government World**

In England, there are some 388 local authorities, which can be broadly categorised by structure into County, District, Borough, Unitary and Metropolitan (or City) Authorities. There are also Parish, Community and Town Councils, though those sit outside the chosen remit of this research.

Between them, local authorities are directly responsible for a huge range of services that impact on all elements of our population, from young people to older people, from schools and leisure centres to street cleaning, refuse and recycling.

Over the past decade, there has been huge change, driven both by central government, but also the increasing demands and needs of our residents in terms of choice and quality.

This has been at a time where there have been ever-decreasing demands for efficiencies, decreasing budgets in real terms, and a desire to drive up performance.

Within authorities, this has created a necessity for greater prioritisation and joint working across service areas and also wider partnerships across the public, private and voluntary sectors to deliver joint ambitions.

This trend has been further encapsulated within government and sector guidance with a widened remit for local authorities to lead and deliver on quality of life, community well being and environmental sustainability agendas, linked to a new place shaping responsibility.

In human terms, the authorities are composed of professional, permanent Officers, led by a Chief Executive and Directors, and Councillors, who are elected via the democratic process.

The senior Officers and members between them hold roles that allow for the establishment of policy direction, strategic decision making, and service delivery.

### **8.2.3 Top Teams in Local Government**

Local Government legislation was introduced in 2000 to create options for Local Authorities to develop more accountable decision making processes, with more defined roles for Councillors (Members) and Officers.

Previously, decisions had been made through a Committee process, where a large number of Councillors voted on proposals put forward in reports by Officers.

The legislation introduced in 2000 gave rise to new models of governance in Local Government, including the Cabinet/Leader model, which has since become the predominant, though not the sole, mechanism of choice. Other mechanisms include the Mayoral system and Fourth Option models.

This created a team of between six and ten Councillors that take a defined responsibility for developing and leading policy within a local authority, with other Councillors taking up a role that has become termed Overview and Scrutiny.

Further, the legislation also established the principle of a shared legitimacy of leadership within a local authority between Members and Officers, with both holding responsibility for strategic leadership.

In essence, members hold responsibility for setting the overall policy direction of the organisation, and officers the responsibility for operational decision making and policy implementation. However, strategic development became a shared remit.

As a direct result, the two leadership teams of Cabinet or equivalent (the Councillor Team) and the Senior Management Team of equivalent (the Officer Team) came together through necessity for discussions around strategy.

That being said, the exact format and time for the relationship, and indeed specific structure or process in detail, did not form part of legislation, so every authority has created a system based upon local needs (often political), and inherently unique.

#### **8.2.4 Prevailing Leadership Development in Local Government**

When I began this study in 2000, development in the local government sector was very much officer focused, and geared towards professional skill development.

That year also saw the establishment of the Improvement and Development Agency for Local Government (I&DeA), which has increasingly become the improvement arm of the Local Government Association.

The remit of the I&DeA also embraced member and officer development. To that end, a Senior Manager Leadership Programme was established for Officers, and the Leadership Academy was established for leading members.

The focus of these programmes went beyond the development of functional skills, and as their titles describe, into the realms of personal and organisational leadership. These programmes have since become standard development requirements for individuals in the sector.

#### **8.2.4.1 The Political Skills Framework**

In 2003, the I&DeA commissioned research by Professor Jo Sylvester, Professor of Occupational Psychology at Goldsmiths College, into a competency framework for members, which became widely known as the Political Skills Framework.

The project involved the usage of a survey to explore both role and political skill requirements of Councillors. The resultant framework has been described as *“A set of behavioural indicators across a range of criteria relevant to the successful work of elected members”*.

For all Councillors, it provided behavioural descriptions of competences related to Community Leadership; Communication Skills; Regulating and monitoring; Working in Partnership; Scrutiny and challenge; and political understanding.

Further, it provided additional descriptions of competences for the Leader and members of the Executive, namely Providing Vision; Managing Performance; and Excellence in Leadership.

The framework has provided a basis of development for members since that date, and provided a common language for this to take place.

#### **8.2.4.2 The Strategic Team Development Centre**

In 2004, the I&DeA commenced the development, piloting and roll out of a Top Team Programme which focused for the first time on relational and behavioural dynamics within a Top Team consisting of Members and Officers.

The programme, which became known as the Strategic Team Development Centre (STDC), once again utilised a behavioural competence framework, this time based upon the Management Competence Initiative.

It utilised ten distinct behaviours, namely Thinking Strategically; Thinking Flexibly; Making Things Happen; Building Confidence; Getting the Message Across; Managing Information; Developing Others; Outcome Focus; Building Alliances; and Facilitation.

The approach recognised that in any specific context, individuals had a preference to employ a specific behavioural response. Further, that in any team, a combination of preference that covers as broad a base of the total package of behaviours is likely to produce the best situational response.

Thus, the STDC recognised the importance of relationships, understanding and context in terms of developing successful Top Teams.



## **8.3 *Research methodology***

### **8.3.1 A change in Paradigm**

The theoretical and philosophical discussion surrounding a shift in paradigm was discussed fully within Project 2, and hence will only be noted in summary below.

### **8.3.2 Research Positioning**

The initial stage of this research project utilised a Constructivist Interpretive approach to explore the understanding of leadership of senior members and officers in a specific local authority, utilising the vehicle of semi-structured interviews. The theoretical framework utilised was that of Top Team Leadership (Kakabadse and Kakabadse, 1999) and Upper Echelon Theory (Hambrick and Mason, 1984).

The use of such qualitative techniques was deemed appropriate given the nature of the study, and the necessity to elicit and explore perceptions of a limited number of individuals operating within a specific context, with an inherent purpose of gaining understanding.

The resultant data was used to develop a framework that sought to capture the richness of response obtained from the participants, and encapsulate rather than ignore difference of opinion.

This framework produced a number of constructs, namely Demographics; Roles; Strategic Leadership; Political Understanding; and Context.

In turn, these framed a number of additions and variations, with permission, to an existing survey instrument utilised by Kakabadse and Kakabadse, which enjoys validation and wide usage. The process involved an iterative series of discussions with a range of practitioners and field experts until face validity was reached with the amended questionnaire.

This final element of research, Project 3, seeks to test the reliability of a research instrument, the amended questionnaire, and to test for wider validity of the aforementioned constructs relating to the understanding of leadership emanating from Projects 1 and 2 across local government in England.

The notions of validity, reliability, and indeed that of testing, lead us to the Popperian perspective, an inherently scientific approach based on processes of measurement and analysis, and the utilisation of statistical techniques.

### **8.3.3 Utilising Quantitative Techniques**

Quantitative research is a systematic approach to the measurement and analysis of objective data that holds a particular focus on key variables in a value free environment.

In terms of our research objectives, such structured analyses allow us to explore whether large numbers of individuals of some shared characteristic hold similar perceptions or viewpoints, and potential relationships between constructs or variables.

## **8.4 Research Specifics**

### **8.4.1 The Survey Instrument**

This research has two inherent over-arching objectives. Firstly, to take the amended questionnaire from Project 2 that had achieved Face Validation, and to test its validity across a wider audience, namely the local government sector in England.

Secondly, to test broader understanding of the constructs and the leadership model derived from Project 1 across local government in England.

Thus, the intent is to utilise the amended questionnaire as a survey instrument across a given sample of local government officers and members.

### **8.4.2 The Sample**

The original ambition for this project had been to survey all members and officers serving within Cabinet Teams (or equivalent) in England. In practice, however, this proved to be an overly ambitious objective.

Firstly, there were pragmatic issues. The first difficulty is obtaining a current list of all members of the Cabinet (or equivalent) and Senior Officer Teams. The Cabinet itself is fairly well defined, but records are only kept centrally of those individuals who are elected to said positions at the time of the Full Council AGM, there being no formal mechanism for updating if change occurs during the Municipal year.

Similarly, the make up of the Senior Officer Team varies from authority to authority. For some, it is the Chief Executive plus senior directors; for others, Heads of Service are included; for others, the composition is some combination of the above.

Therefore, obtaining a definitive and up to date list is problematic.

There is also an economic barrier. Potentially, the combination of Top Team members could reach up to twenty people per authority. With 388 English local authorities, this creates a potential sample size of 7760, something that would prove economically unviable for this research.

As a result, a more specific sample was chosen, which gave clarity of position, and created an economically viable solution. Thus, the sample became every Chief Executive and Leader of each local authority in England. The associated challenge became one of achieving high response rate for the purposes of validity, given the time constraints on the individuals involved.

### **8.4.3 Research Questions and Hypotheses**

The survey instrument seeks to test the applicability of the leadership model derived from qualitative research of Project 1, via the survey instrument defined in Project 2.

The leadership model explores constructs around Strategic Leadership Ability, Role, Demographics, Context variables and leadership performance, and seeks to address both the validity of the scales in question from Project 2, but also the significance of those scales. Hence, the following hypotheses are put forward, which follow both the Kakabadse and Kakabadse Research (1999) and the inherent validated research questionnaire, and Myers (2001) research.

#### Hypothesis H1

Demographic variables in isolation (length of tenure, age; member of cabinet team; political context) have a significant impact on leadership performance

#### Hypothesis H2a

Perceptions and understanding of role have a significant impact on leadership performance (following Jaques, 1951; Hambrick and Mason, 1984; Kakabadse and Kakabadse, 1999; Myers, 2001)

#### Hypothesis H2b

Job satisfaction has a significant impact on leadership performance (following Kakabadse and Kakabadse, 1999; Myers, 2001)

#### Hypothesis H3a

Strategic Leadership Ability has a significant impact on leadership performance (following Cyert and March, 1963; Selznick, 1957; Rowe, 2001; Boal and Hooijberg, 2001)

#### Hypothesis H3b

Cabinet Decision Making Ability has a significant impact on leadership performance (Kakabadse and Kakabadse, 1999)

#### Hypothesis H4

Understanding and influencing group political processes has a significant impact on leadership performance (emanating from Project 1 of this research).

#### Hypothesis H5

Context has a significant impact on leadership performance (following Fiedler, 1967; Tannenbaum and Schmidt, 1958); Kakabadse and Kakabadse, 1999)

### **8.4.4 Methods of Analysis**

Statistical analysis has long been a widely accepted set of techniques associated with quantitative methodologies and scientific process.

This research employs a number of key statistical methodologies. Firstly, this study utilises descriptive statistics, specifically the use of frequency distribution allied to responses or ranges, together with associated median results. Whilst SPSS has been extensively used for such analysis, the results are provided in both tabular and graphical format.

The research also utilises multiple Regression Analysis to explore potentially causal relationships between variables. Here, we test the predictive level of the variables within each scale against a dependent variable, in this instance leadership performance.

The resultant SPSS tables provide a range of outputs associated with this regression analysis, namely the regression coefficient (B); the standard error of B; the standardised coefficient (beta); the student's *t* value for beta; and a two-tailed significance for beta. The process of moving all coefficients to standardised coefficients ensures greater comparability, as they are all based upon the same unit of measurement.

SPSS also undertakes an evaluation of “goodness of fit”, with the resultant R Squared score equating to the proportion of variation in the dependent variable explained by the variable in question. The value will lie between 0.00 and 1.0, with higher values demonstrating greater levels of explanation and reliability.

In terms of reliability of the questionnaire, and the scales contained therein, this research utilises the Cronbach Alpha model of internal consistency, with a lower limit of 0.60 providing a robust level of reliability.

Given our objective of validating the amended questionnaire in the local government context, this value holds great importance, as it demonstrates (or otherwise) greater ability to generalise and replicate results.

## **8.5 Analysis & Outcomes**

As noted, this chapter will apply a range of statistical techniques to the analysis of the responses received. In the first instance, there will be an exploration utilising descriptive statistics to obtain a first impression of the feedback.

This will be followed by a more in depth analysis utilised to explore the validity of the scales and constructs utilised within the questionnaire,

Further, to test the impact of the constructs from the leadership framework evolved from the first stage of this research project, namely Demographics, Strategic Leadership, Role, Context and Political Group Understanding and Influence on Leadership Performance.

It should be noted that where a respondent has provided no response to a question, it will have created a “missing” score for the analysis. As a result, the following analysis will utilise only valid percentages whereby the calculation will have utilised only valid responses.

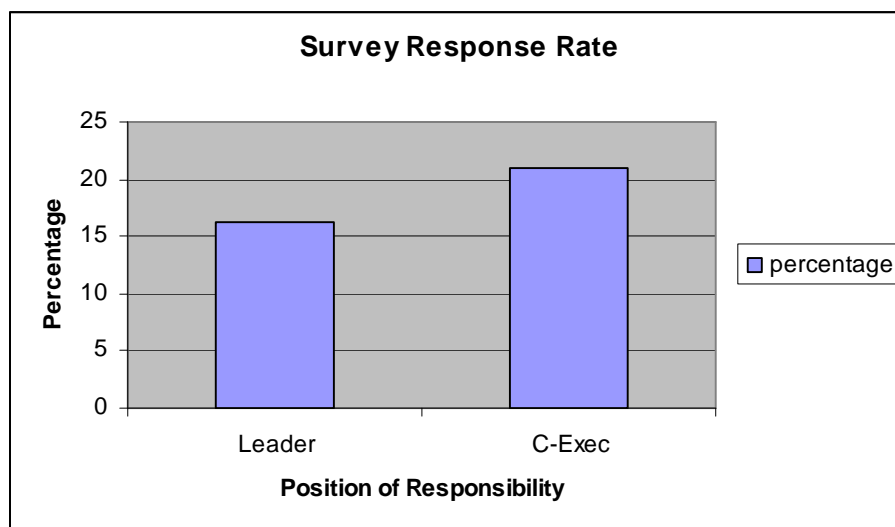
### 8.5.1 Survey Response

The questionnaire was sent to the Leaders and Chief Executives of all 388 Local Authorities in England, giving a total of 776 possible responses.

Of those 776 possible responses, 153 responses were received, equating to an overall 19.71% response rate.

Indeed, further analysis shows 67 responses by Leaders, equating to 17.26% of all Leaders of Authorities in England, as demonstrated in the figure below. Similarly, there were 86 responses by Chief Executives, equating to 22.16% of all Chief Executives of Authorities in England.

**Figure 6 Survey Response**



Further analysis shows that 60.8% of respondents were from a Borough or District Council, which coincides with the 70.5% of responses being from authorities of less than 2500 staff.

Also, 77.1% of responses were from a single party context in terms of political administration. This would suggest greater levels of cohesion within the Top Teams, and lower levels of diversity of idea (O'Bannon and Gupta, 1992).

## 8.5.2 Descriptive Statistics

### 8.5.2.1 Demographics

Prior research by O'Reilly and Chatman (1996, pp 157 - 200) in the area of Top Teams has explored the joint notions of heterogeneity and homogeneity in terms of demographics.

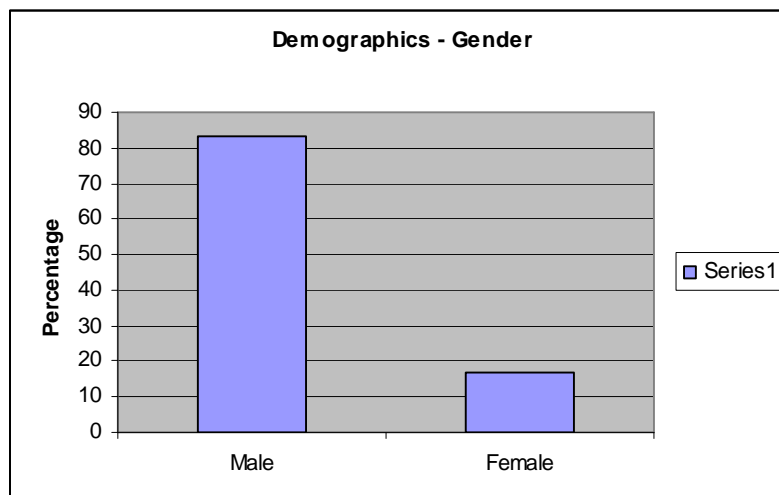
Murray (1989) describes Top Team homogeneity as a “*group level index of the degree of similarity between members of a group*”. In essence, it describes the similarity between members of the Top Team, and is thought to create greater levels of cohesion and achieve consensus more readily.

Conversely, Heterogeneity is described as greater difference between members of a Top Team, and is likely to promote difference and difficulty over consensus.

The same research concludes, however, that heterogeneity is likely to produce higher levels of creativity, and is likely to significantly enhanced responses to diverse and changing contexts.

#### 8.5.2.1.1 Gender

Figure 7 Gender



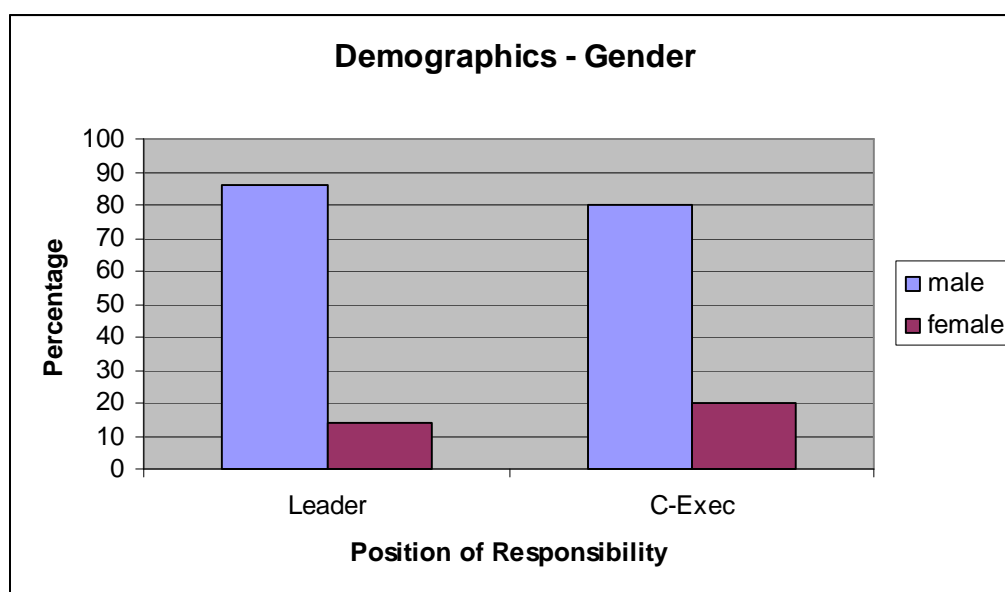


The analysis demonstrates that 83% of respondents were male, and 27% female. This raises a concern surrounding issues of diversity in ethical terms surrounding the drive to achieve equality across gender.

Further, there appear to be high levels of homogeneity in relation to gender, both for officers and members, which would suggest higher levels of cohesion, but a possible barrier to diverse responses and creativity (O'Bannon and Gupta, 1992).

If we take a cluster response by position, the position is broadly similar, with 86% of Leaders being male versus 14% female. In terms of Chief Executive responses, we see that 80% of respondents were male against 20% female. This suggests a greater degree of homogeneity in the officer structure than the member cadre.

**Figure 8 Demographics - Gender**

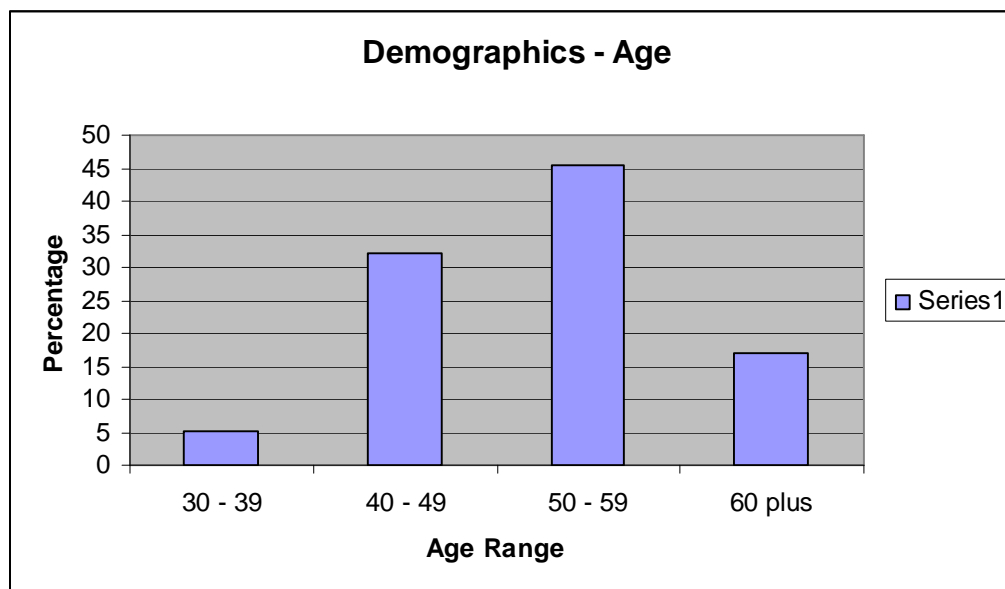


### 8.5.2.1.2 Age

**Table 27 Demographics - Age**

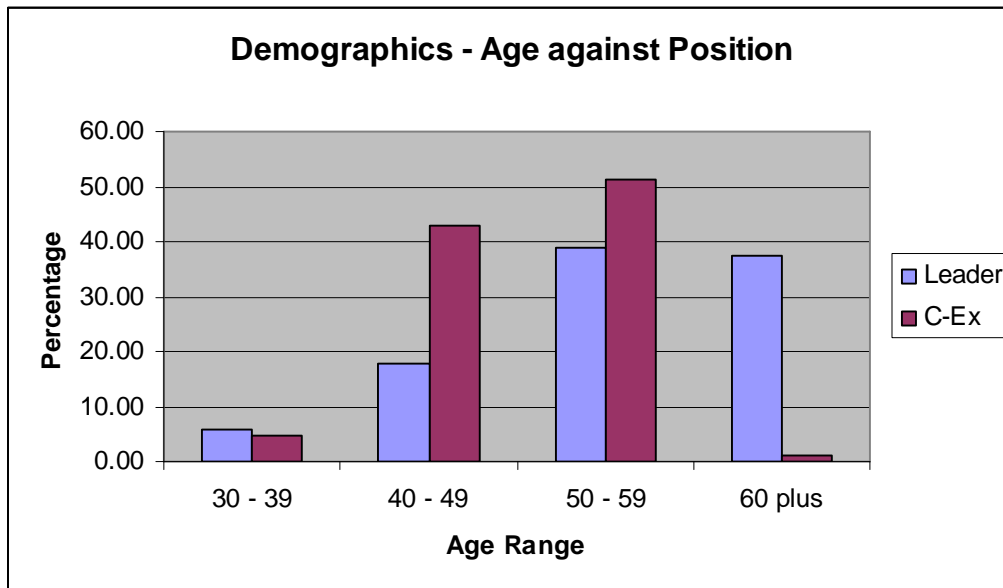
		Age			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	30 to 39	8	5.2	5.3	5.3
	40 to 49	49	32.0	32.2	37.5
	50 to 59	69	45.1	45.4	82.9
	60 or over	26	17.0	17.1	100.0
	Total	152	99.3	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.7		
Total		153	100.0		

**Figure 9 Demographics - Age**



Child (1974) demonstrated that there was a direct link between age and risk aversion, inferring possible impact on leadership performance in another area to that of diversity.

As the above graph demonstrates, the modal age position resides in the 50-59 range, with 45.4% of respondents occupying that range.

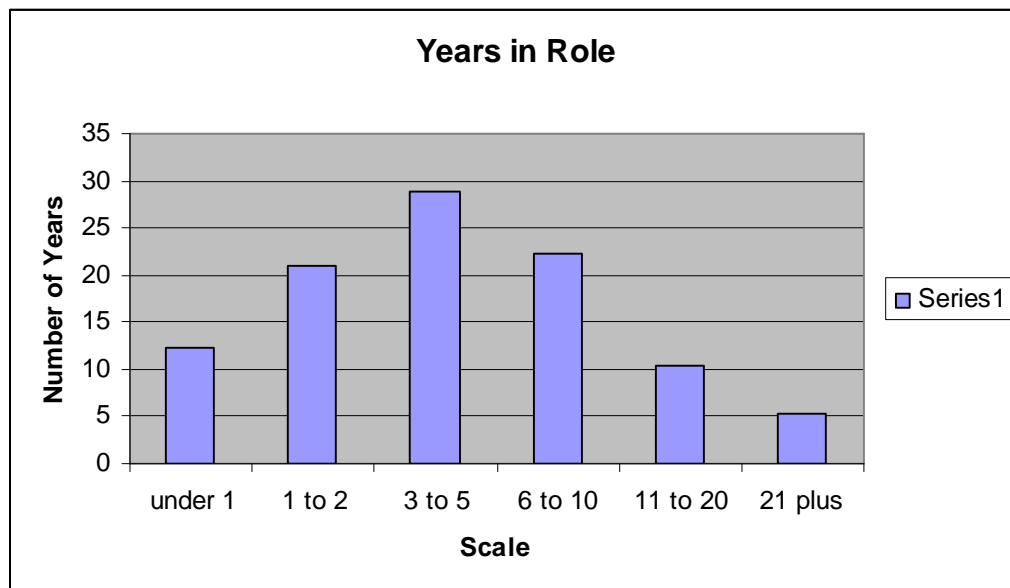


**Figure 10 Demographics - Age vs. Population**

Clustering against Position demonstrates that there whilst the modal positions for both Leaders and Chief Executives lie within the 50 – 59 age range, the second highest scale is divergent, being 40-49 for Chief Executives, and 60 plus for Leaders.

This may present not only an increased level of diversity of idea (Kakabadse and Kakabadse, 1999) but also higher levels of risk aversion between Leaders and Chief Executives (Child, 1974).

### 8.5.2.1.3 Years in Role



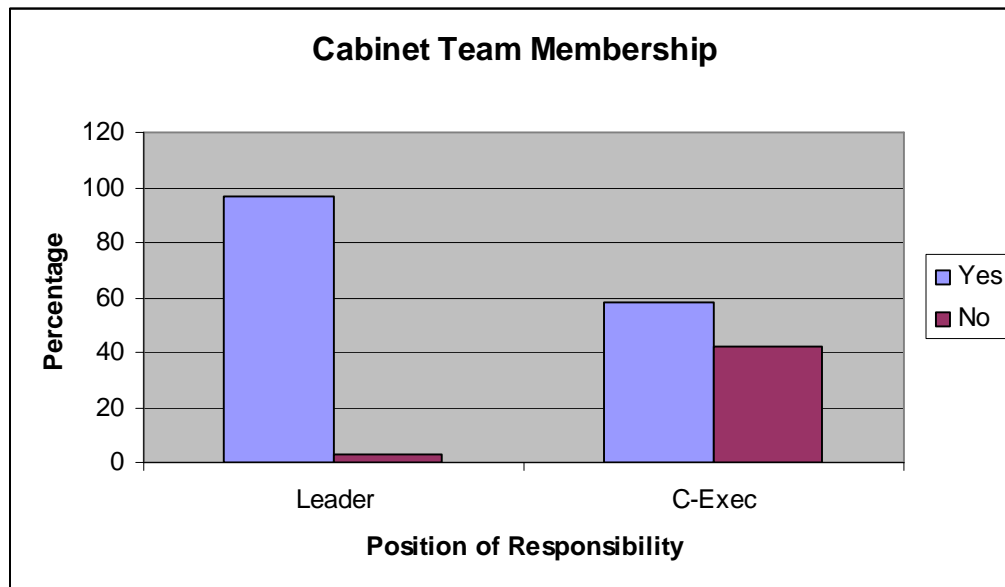
**Figure 11 Demographics - Years in Role**

Pfeffer (1983) suggested that members of a team have to occupy a role long enough to become versed in local pressures and practises. Similarly, Wagner, Pfeffer and O'Reilly (1984, pp 74-92) propose tenure as a predictor of congruence between colleagues in an organisation.

Other authors, notably Katz (1982) described the link between tenure and stability, though not between tenure and performance. Wiersema and Bird (1993, pp 996-1025) likewise demonstrated linkage between tenure and successful strategic change.

Interestingly, this shows that 62.1% of respondents have been in the role of Leader or Chief Executive for less than five years, in essence for a single administrative term. Indeed, this holds true for tenure of under 2 years for 20.9% of respondents, suggesting that tenure is potentially an issue in Cabinet Teams.

#### 8.5.2.1.4 Membership of Cabinet Team



**Figure 12 Demographics - Cabinet Team membership**

The inclusion of this construct within the leadership framework for Top Teams in Local Government emerged as an important theme from earlier the qualitative research that informed the amendment to the Kakabadse Questionnaire (1999).

The Modernisation Agenda for Local Government describes a shared legitimacy for leadership between officers and members. Specifically, it describes the critical pairing between Cabinet members and Directors, the Leader and the Chief Executive, and also the coming together of the Senior Management Team and the Cabinet as the Cabinet Team.

It was clear from that earlier qualitative research that there existed varying views as to who was part of that Cabinet Team, though I would have expected there to be stronger feeling of membership of the Cabinet Team by the Leader and Chief Executive.

The response rate shows that only 73.8% of respondents overall considered themselves to be members of the Cabinet Team. Further analysis, as shown in the figure above, demonstrates that this percentage hides the variance between Leader and Chief Executive perceptions, namely that whilst 97% of Leaders consider themselves

to be members of the Cabinet Team or equivalent, only 58% of Chief Executives share that perspective.

This would suggest that rather than the shared legitimacy for leadership espoused through legislation and guidance, many authorities still perceive the more traditional paradigm being dominant, often described as members leading and officers doing. More detailed regression analysis will test the significance of this.

### 8.5.2.2 Role and Job Satisfaction

This section explores individuals' perception of their role within the Cabinet team, and their motivation and satisfaction levels associated as individuals in undertaking that role.

#### 8.5.2.2.1 Role

The amended questionnaire adopted for the survey separated questions that affected members and officers jointly, from those specific to members only. The following table shows the results relating to the joint questions.

**Table 28 Role**

<b>Role - Members and Officers</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
Spend time bureaucratic	1.3	14.5	17.1	63.8	3.3
Civic Engagement activities	0.7	23.5	8.5	63.4	3.9
Operational Issues	4.6	30.7	20.9	39.9	3.9
Work Life Balance issues	3.3	20.3	22.9	37.9	15.7
Members take sole responsibility	14.5	47.4	21.1	11.8	5.3

The description of role for members and officers, and the differentiation between the two, has proven to be a pragmatic consideration for all authorities. In part, this is the result of flexibility provided for in the guidance and legislation surrounding the modernisation agenda for government.

The notion contained in said guidance suggests that members hold responsibility for policy leadership based on their democratic legitimacy, all be it supported by professional advice from officers.

The Operational Leadership and related Decision Making of an authority, concerning day to day operational issues, is the responsibility of the officers.

Strategic leadership and associated decision making is described as being the mandate of both officers and members, coming together in the forum as described in this study of the Cabinet Team.

The flexibility of the guidance means that whilst the principles above are clearly defined, it is at the discretion of each authority to describe where the absolute limits, discretion and delegation are drawn. As a result, all authorities have constitutions, and therefore roles, distinct and possibly unique to themselves. Hence the need in many authority development and improvement programmes to explore role expectations with members and officers.

One of the issues specific to local authorities, as brought out in the initial qualitative stage of this study, was the notion of bureaucratic time, involving time being spent on processes that many felt didn't add value to activity, and also Civic time, undertaking elements of civic leadership.

These notions of role have provided a topic for much of the leadership theory underpinning this research, namely Upper Echelon Theory (Hambrick and Mason, 1984), Top Team Research (Kakabadse and Kakabadse, 1999) and in terms of discretion (Jaques, 1951).

There is an Agreement Response Rate (ARR, Strongly Agree plus Agree) of 67.1%, with a Disagreement Response Rate (DRR, Strongly Disagree plus Disagree) of 15.8%, surrounding time being spent on Bureaucratic Council processes. This is fairly consistent when separated into Leader Responses (Agreement Response 70.15%) and Chief Executive Responses (Agreement Response 64.71%).

A similar position exists with the construct relating to spending time of Civic Engagement Activities, with a joint Agreement Response Rate of 67.3%. However, there is a clear separation between Leader (a Disagreement Response Rate of 16.42%) and Chief Executives (Disagreement Response Rate of 30.23%), implying that Leaders perceive they spend more time involved in Civic Leadership activities than chief Executives.

In relation to spending time on Operational Issues, the joint picture is mixed, with an Agreement Rate of 43.8%, and a Disagreement Rate of 35.3%. Indeed, the clustered analysis does not present us with a clearer picture, with a Leader specific Agreement Response Rate of 43.28%, and likewise a 43.02% Agreement Response Rate.

Interestingly, however, there is a degree of variance in the Disagree Response Rates, with Leaders at 31.34% Disagreement Rate, and Chief Executives at 38.27%. If anything, given the guideline of Officers having responsibility for Operational matters, one would expect there to be a higher disagreement rate with leaders than Chief Executives.

My personal perception would be that such a result may be drawn from the notion described in qualitative research by members that electoral cycles produce a short term imperative for members, driving them to become more involved in operational issues than otherwise might be the case. Further, once again based on personal experience, if the research were to look at other officers at Director Level, I would expect the Disagreement Rate would drop.

Of interest here is the high percentage of respondents who describe Work-Life Balance as an issue, with an Agreement Rate of 53.6%.



Specific questions relating only to the role of members produced additional contextual detail. There was strong agreement (ARR of 68.6%) that electoral timescales drove short term and operational involvement, which appears to bear out the initial impressions relating to Operational Engagement above. This clearly links to the high discretionary element (Jaques, 1951) of members roles, which despite the accepted non-operational responsibility as per guidance, is often not challenged.

Further, 97% of Leaders perceive political will as critical in achieving delivery of objectives, and 41.8% agreement (ARR) exists on the fact that salary creates a barrier to effectively carrying out the Leaders Role.

#### **8.5.2.2.2 Job Satisfaction**

The scale relating to job satisfaction explores levels of motivation and satisfaction primarily with an individuals' role within the top team, but also across the authority as a whole.

**Table 29 - Job Satisfaction**

<b><u>Job Satisfaction</u></b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
Most people at my level are satisfied with their job	0	0.7	15.7	60.1	23.5
I am satisfied with my job	0	0.7	4.6	46.4	48.4
Morale is high within the authority	0	5.2	22.9	48.4	23.5
I am motivated to do my job	0	0	4.6	38.6	56.9
I enjoy challenge of my role	0	1.3	2	35.9	60.8
My job is intellectually challenging	1.3	1.3	5.3	33.6	58.6

The scale shows a greater than 80% Agreement Response Rate for all statements with one exception, namely “Morale is high within the authority”, which showed agreement at the 71.9% level.

This demonstrates a split between personal role satisfaction as a member of the Cabinet Team, which demonstrated a high degree of both motivation and satisfaction, and perceptions of overall authority job satisfaction, which demonstrated the lower level of agreement.

### **8.5.2.3 Strategic Leadership Ability**

Strategic Leadership has formed one of the central elements of leadership research for many years, and we would clearly expect from practical experience that constructs relating to this would feature highly in the perceptions of Leaders and Chief executives.

Cyert and March (1963) noted that concern for the evolution of the organisation should focus not only on the heads of organisation, but also the Top Team. As described by Boal and Hooijberg (2001), this would include not only activities associated with making strategic choices, but also issues relating to cohesion, vision, relations between team members, and managing differences of perception and desire.

The Kakabadse instrument utilised four scales that mirrored the descriptions of members and officers in the qualitative stage of research, namely Strategic Leadership; Cohesiveness of Top Team; Pulling Together; and Diversity of idea. These are explored in descriptive terms below.

#### ***8.5.2.3.1 Strategic Leadership Scale***

Prior research by Kakabadse and Kakabadse (1999) demonstrate that an agreed, clear vision has a significant impact on Top Team performance, and instinctively we would expect to see a similar position reflected in this research.

**Table 30 Strategic Leadership Ability**

<b>Strategic Leadership</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
Identify what needs to change	1.3	4.6	7.8	65.4	20.9
Grasp Issue quickly	0	3.9	6.5	69.3	20.3
Grasp issue use it quickly	0	5.9	16.3	64.1	13.7
Change way do things	0	0	3.3	63.4	33.3
Clear strategic direction	0	4.6	3.9	57.5	34
Overall knowledge	0	1.3	3.3	41.2	54.2
Know each part authority works	0	6.5	7.2	58.8	27.5
Reasonable and clear goals	1.3	2	7.8	58.2	30.7
Light at end of tunnel	2	3.9	17	51.6	25.5

From the above table, we can see that there is a the Agreement Response Rate is high across all of the questions, with an ARR of greater than 80% on each with the exception of “the ability to grasp issues and use them quickly” (joint ARR 77.8%) and “Can see the light at the end of the tunnel in respect of current changes” (joint ARR 77.1%).

The highest level of Disagreement is reflected in the question “I Know how each part of the authority works”, though the Disagreement Response Rate (DRR) is still only at the 6.5% level.

#### ***8.5.2.3.2 Cohesive Top Team***

The Kakabadse and Kakabadse research (1999) further demonstrated that the manner in which members of the Top Team related to each other would be significant influence on the success of the Top Team. Their research made specific note of the ability to discuss and explore issues of a sensitive nature, reflected here with an Agreement Response Rate across Leaders and Chief Executives of 85%.

Once again, across the majority of questions there is an agreement of greater than 80% ARR, with the exception of, significantly, the question relating to “Trust Each Other”, which has only a 74.5% ARR, and a DRR (disagreement) level of 9.2%. This would suggest there are implications for the ability to raise sensitive issues, as per the Kakabadse research (1999). Similarly, Giacchino and Kakabadse (2003) noted that trust was one of the influencing factors of Top Team success.

**Table 31 Cohesive Top Team**

Cohesive Top Team			Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Easy to talk to			0	0	0.7	56.9	42.5
Discuss Sensitive issues			0.7	5.9	8.5	47.1	37.9
Understand Each Other			0	5.2	7.8	55.6	31.4
Trust Each other			0	9.2	16.3	54.2	20.3
Consistently imp decisions			0.7	5.2	9.2	56.9	28.1
Address long and short term issues			0	1.3	7.8	56.9	34
Members and officers spend time productively			0.7	2	2.6	57.5	37.3
identify more with personal objectives			10.5	63.8	17.1	8.6	0
Maintaining Cabinet Team Cohesion			5.2	13.7	24.2	41.2	15.7

#### ***8.5.2.3.3 Pulling Together***

The Kakabadse instrument includes the scale “Pulling Together”, and although not widely referred to as part of the leadership framework derived from the qualitative element of this research, it did receive some mention, hence its inclusion.

**Table 32 Pulling Together**

<b>Pulling Together</b>		<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
Colleagues get on well as team		0	0	1.3	57.5	41.2
Get on well with different functions		0	0	0	51.6	48.4
Good team spirit		0	0	4.6	49.7	45.8
Cabinet team pulling same direction		0	3.3	7.8	49.7	39.2

As can be seen from the above, there is little disagreement across Leaders and Chief Executives as to their relative perceptions across team activity, with only minor levels of disagreement (3.3%) with the notion of the Cabinet Team pulling in the same direction, a significant factor in the Kakabadse (1999) findings.

#### **8.5.2.3.4 Diversity of Idea**

This scale relates directly to the Kakabadse research (1999) noting that clarity and consensus of vision and objective, and the ability to address sensitive issues, have significant impact on successful Top Teams.

**Table 33 Diversity of Idea**

<b>Diversity of Ideas</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
Clear Cut long term objectives	0	3.3	5.9	52.9	37.9
Differing Views as to future direction	11.8	47.7	20.9	17	2.6
Team pull in different directions	43.1	47.7	1.3	5.2	2.6
Sensitive issues not addressed	15	50.3	13.7	17.6	3.3

As we can see from the table above, whilst there is a 90.8% ARR surrounding clarity of long term objectives, and resistance to the position that the Cabinet Team members pull in different directions (DRR 90.8%), the questions made surrounding the Team

members holding differing views as to future direction, and the position that sensitive issues remain un-addressed show much lower levels of agreement by respondents.

#### 8.5.2.4 Cabinet Decision Making

This scale relates directly to the Kakabadse research (1999) noting that clarity and consensus of vision and objective, and the ability to address sensitive issues, have significant impact on successful Top Teams.

Whilst the table below demonstrates strong perceived levels (ARR greater than 80%) of agreement for the questions “I support most of the decisions made by the Cabinet Team” and “The quality of decision making at Cabinet Team is high”, the remaining questions show much lower levels of agreement, and perhaps reflect preference of behaviour and contextual responses.

Specifically, Bachrach and Baratz (1963) describe “the practice of limiting the scope of actual decision making to safe issues”, which is linked to diversity of idea, above.

**Table 34 Cabinet Decision Making**

<b>Cabinet Decision Making</b>	<b>Agreement</b>
support teams decision making	87.5
high quality decision making	83.6
get own way	37.3
right and wrong way	22.9
Heart and head	22.2
decisions behind closed doors	12.4
decisions changed day to day	4.6
dislike others changing views	3.3
checking out plans slows down	1.4

### 8.5.2.5 Understanding and Influencing Political Group Processes

This element of the leadership framework evolved specifically from the perceptions of leadership derived from the qualitative research, though elements can be seen in prior academic studies.

The notions of power and influence have been explored by Lukes (1974) and Dahl (1958); the avoidance and resolution of conflict (Bachrach and Baratz, 1963); and explorations of the policy process in a political environment (Kington, 1984).

Kakabadse and Kakabadse (2002) further describe a position where “*politics is considered as the active direction of a political community, and can be equated with leadership*”.

This last notion is central to the local government context, where although the role of the group is considered amongst practitioners to be the single most important point of influence not mentioned in local authority legislation, and often excluded from local authority constitutions.

**Table 35 - Political Group Understanding and Influence, Members and Officers**

<b>Pol Grp - Members and Officers</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
I understand political group processes	0	0	3.9	28.8	67.3
Understand the role of different members in group	0	1.3	3.9	34.6	60.1
issues come to group already decided	3.3	35.3	32	20.9	8.5
political group has clear vision	1.3	11.8	18.3	53.6	15
group vision relates to manifesto	2	7.8	23.5	45.1	21.6
political groups the real focus of policy making	4.6	17.9	30.5	38.4	8.6
can influence decisions in group	0	5.2	13.7	47.7	33.3
everyone aware of the big picture	4.6	11.2	35.5	37.5	11.2

The table demonstrates the feedback in relation to questions asked jointly of Leaders and Chief Executives.

The questions relating to the understanding of group processes and understanding the role of different members of group related to power both receive high levels of agreement (96.1% and 94.7% respectively), which would suggest that both Leaders and Chief Executives have an understanding about how to ensure items are on the agenda for group, and who and how they need to influence to obtain a desired outcome from group discussions.

Such understanding and influence becomes important in a local government context, as this is widely thought to be the arena for gaining what has widely become known as “constituency of idea”, and is considered the forum in which decisions are “made” before entering the formal environment of a committee or council setting.

It is interesting to note, therefore, that in terms of the question addressed only to members enquiring whether “Some members have more group influence than me” that only 73.1% of Leaders disagreed with said statement, with 9% in agreement, and 17.9% neither agreeing nor disagreeing. This is an important point as in terms of formal Council legitimacy within a Cabinet system, the power of Full Council is delegated directly to the Leader.

It is interesting, therefore, that there is no clear position in respondents mind as to whether the “political group is the real focus for policy making”, showing an Agreement level of 47%, a disagreement level of 22.5%, with the remaining 30.5% neither agreeing nor disagreeing.

Similarly, whilst 29.4% of respondents agree that “issues come to group that are already decided”, suggesting that there is a smaller cabal that makes decisions prior to them being endorsed at group (noted in the earlier qualitative research), a further 38.6% disagree with this statement, with 32% of respondents neither agreeing nor disagreeing.



In terms of the political group providing clear policy drivers to the authority, it is important to note that only 68.6% of respondents feel there is a clear vision within the political group, and only 66.7% of respondents feel that the vision links to the party manifesto (though we must take into account that a number of respondents may be Independent and not from a political party, and hence unlikely to have a manifesto).

When the question relating to the political group providing a clear vision for the authority is analysed by cluster, it becomes apparent that whilst 80.6% of Leaders agree with this statement, only 58.14% of Chief Executives are in agreement. This gives cause for concern at a practical level given the policy setting role of members under guidance, and a difference of perception of greater than 20% between Chief Executives and Leaders as to whether or not policy direction is given.

The second question provided to members only was “I feel able to contribute to group discussions”, with 95.5% agreement level from Leaders. It is interesting, however, that 4.5% of Leaders felt unable to do so, given that most political Leaders from my experience would describe that as one of their main activities.

#### **8.5.2.6 Context**

The respondents were asked a range of contextual issues, which have been separated into three distinct areas, namely Role Autonomy; Communication; and Customer Focus, discussed below.

##### ***8.5.2.6.1 Role Autonomy, Independence and Discipline***

These three related scales have been included within the contextual elements as they refer not only to members of the Top Team, but the rather refer to the culture of the organisation at a global level. The relevant responses are shown in the following table.

Taking the scale around Independence to act, there is strong agreement around freedom to undertake ones role (ARR 92.2%), and that staff have the freedom to influence changes (ARR 86.9%).

However, there is a lower level of agreement (ARR of 78.4%) that staff have the scope for individual initiative, possibly relating to the earlier discussion relating to age related risk aversion (Child, 1974).

Drawing inference from the responses within the Independence scale becomes more problematic, as for each of questions there is less coherence of response, which perhaps relates to the uniqueness of context of authority and individual preference. The later Cronbach Alpha test will provide a greater insight into the validity of the scale, and regression analysis will test the relative significance.

A similar position can be noted for the Discipline scale, with no strength of agreement or disagreement being established for any of the questions asked.

**Table 36 Contextual Scales**

<b>Autonomy</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
Freedom to perform role	1.3	5.2	1.3	63.4	28.8
Staff have freedom to influence changes	0	0.7	12.4	66	20.9
scope for individual initiative few constraints	0	3.9	17.6	60.8	17.6
<b>Independence</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
Being my own boss	1.3	25.5	32.7	27.5	13.1
Left alone to do work	7.8	45.8	27.5	15	3.9
Position where others don't control	5.9	28.8	30.7	24.2	10.5
Resent told what to do	15	40.5	28.1	10.5	5.9
<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
Structured way manage authority	0	2.6	12.4	66.7	18.3
Disciplined follow through	0.7	5.2	19	66	9.2
Disciplined authority	0	3.9	10.5	62.7	22.9
Follow procedures	0	8.5	41.2	46.4	3.9
People pay attention to detail	0	2.6	28.8	57.5	11.1
People be well disciplined	0	8.5	37.3	47.7	6.5
Respect people stick to rules	0	22.9	50.3	26.8	0
Cab Team more disciplined	11.1	41.2	26.1	21.6	0
Money wasted no controls	28.8	54.9	11.8	4.6	0

### 8.5.2.6.2 Communication – Authority and Personal

The two scales test communication firstly in the Authority as a whole, though with specific reference to the Cabinet Team, and secondly communication as an individual.

**Table 37 Communication - Authority Wide**

<b>Communication - Authority</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
Quality info cab team good	0	3.3	16.4	64.5	15.8
Communication across departments is good	0	0.7	28.1	58.2	13.1
Members of the cabinet team are good listeners	0	3.9	20.9	73.9	1.3
I am regularly informed new developments	0	3.3	7.2	65.4	24.2
Communication in departments is good	0	3.3	26.1	56.2	14.4
I am only informed on a need to know basis (negative scale)	19	53.6	15	12.4	0
people should manage their own problems	24.2	66.7	6.5	2.6	0
I have all information needed	0	2.6	13.7	58.2	25.5
<b>Communication – Personal</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
I communicate well with peers	0	1.3	2	64.1	32.7
easy to talk to	0	2.6	3.9	60.1	33.3
I communicate effectively with those around	0	1.3	3.3	68	27.5
An open management style is important	0	0	2.6	38.6	58.8
I am kept informed of progress	0	1.3	0	42.5	56.2

Whilst there is a general high level of agreement across the questions, the following provide some insight into the context of local authorities.

A large part of the agenda facing local government surrounds the drive to act more corporately, or utilising the present jargon “to act in a more joined up fashion”, and forms a central theme of the key lines of enquiry for the Audit Commissions CPA (Corporate Performance Assessment). Hence, the agreement level of 71.3% for “Communication across departments is good” provides some cause for concern. Similarly, a 70.6% agreement rate for “Communication in departments is good” suggests that more needs to be done to build consensus and commitment. In terms of the scale relating to Communication at a personal level, there is strong overall agreement with each question, so once again there needs to be greater analysis utilising the Cronbach alpha and regression analysis to test the significance of the scale.

### 8.5.2.6.3 Customer Focus

This section explores responses to two separate scales, namely customer focus and attention to customer care.

**Table 38 Customer Focus Scales**

<b>Customer Focus</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
Services fit customer needs	0	1.3	9.8	52.9	35.9
We exceed customer expectations	0	19	37.3	29.4	14.4
Everyone knows how they add value	0	10.5	35.9	43.1	10.5
We are responsive to changing priorities	0	0	9.2	67.8	23
The Customer is king	0	4.6	22.2	47.1	26.1
<b>Attention customer care</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
Management issues are dealt with at the expense of customer care	8.5	51.6	25.5	14.4	0
Attention is diverted away from customer care	22.9	64.7	9.8	2.6	0
Not enough thought is given to customer care	31.6	40.8	12.5	14.5	0.7
Budgeting effects customer care adversely	26.1	46.4	20.3	6.5	0.7
Internal politics adversely effect customer service	39.9	41.2	10.5	7.8	0.7

Local Government, in essence, is about ensuring that a range of services are appropriately provided to meet the needs of customers. This has also been a key line of enquiry within the CPA process.

As such, whilst only 1.3% of respondents disagree that the services provided by local authorities fit customer needs, it is personally a little disheartening to note that there is

an agreement level of only 43.8% that customer expectations are exceeded; that 73.2% agree that the customer is king; and that 15.2% feel that not enough thought is given to customer care.

The importance of customer care was clearly described in the work of Kakabadse and Kakabadse (1999), linked to organisational sustainability.

Interestingly, this outcome focus linked to customer need is a specific element of the Strategic Team Development Centre approach utilised by the I&DeA.

### 8.5.2.7 Leadership Performance

For the purpose of this research, Leadership Performance is taken as the dependent variable, given its wide recognition as a determinant of organisational success.

**Table 39 Leadership Performance Scales**

<b>Leadership Performance</b>					
<b>Positive</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
Cabinet Team are Performing Effectively	0.7	0.7	6.5	56.9	35.3
I am committed to leadership of authority	1.3	0.7	1.3	10.5	86.3
Successful policy implementation depends on handling the cabinet team	2	2.6	15	40.5	39.9
Needs of the customer are well understood by the cabinet team	0.7	4.6	6.5	48.4	39.9
<b>Negative</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
Top Team too distant from daily basis	32	54.9	11.1	2	0
Cabinet team have little impact on running the authority	56.2	38.6	3.9	1.3	0
Chief Exec is too distant	72.5	15.7	9.8	0.7	1.3
Cabinet Members have no effective impact on management of the council	58.2	37.9	1.3	2.6	0
Cabinet Team Officers are too distant	59.5	32	8.5	0	0
Cabinet team could be more tolerant of each other	33.3	42.5	10.5	13.1	0.7

As can be seen in the previous figure, the scale is separated into positive and negative influencers. The scales have been validated in a range of studies, including prior research by Kakabadse and Kakabadse (1999), Myers and Kakabadse (2001) and Giacchino and Kakabadse (2003). In each of these studies relating to contexts in private and public sector Top Teams, the scale has received a significant Cronbach Alpha, and later statistical analysis will test the scale in the local government context.



In relation to descriptive statistical analysis, we can see that, with the exception of one question, there is an 80% plus agreement by respondents across all questions.

The sole exception is the final question, namely “Cabinet Members could be more tolerant of each other”, a negative scale with 13.8% agreement level. This relates too much of the earlier discussion about cohesion and understanding.

#### **8.5.2.8 Authority Culture**

The relationship between leadership and culture has long been a focus of leadership research, for example in the contingency approach (Fiedler, 1967; Tannenbaum and Schmidt, 1958) and later in the Top Tea approach of Kakabadse and Kakabadse (1999).

The aim of this study was to explore the impact of a range of constructs on leadership performance. This scale, validated in prior research by Kakabadse et al (1999), Myers and Kakabadse (2001) and Giacchino and Kakabadse (2003), is included here to explore the reliability of the scale in a local government setting only, and hence is primarily used to obtain a Cronbach alpha score. As such, for the purposes of this research it is considered a dependent variable.

However, as demonstrated in the table below, there is an Agreement Response Rate of greater than 85% for all questions asked.

**Table 40 Authority Culture Scales**

<b>Authority Culture</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
Feel Part of Authority	0	0	1.3	33.3	65.4
Identify with authority	0	0	1.3	34	64.7
Committed to authority	0	0	0	23.5	76.5
Committed to colleagues	0	0	0	34	66
Excellent staff	0	0	8.5	43.8	47.7
People dedicated to success	0	0	7.2	47.7	45.1
Staff development taken seriously	0	0.7	8.5	49	41.8
Friendly atmosphere	0	2.6	1.3	44.4	51.6
People make authority tick	0	2.6	0	29.4	68
Authority culture encourages hard work	1.3	2	7.8	45.8	43.1

### 8.5.3 Reliability analysis

In order to make analysis more meaningful and easier to digest a series of items can be measured in the form of a scale, or theme/dimension. In this study there are 119 different items included in nineteen different scales, ranging from leadership performance to decision making within the cabinet team. Can the data be reduced to a more manageable scale for analysis and interpretation?

A further type of analysis used in the study examines reliabilities – a technique to test the reliability of a scale calculated from a range of variables. Reliability analysis tests their robustness. A reliable scale is one that yields stable results that give confidence in the relevance of the measurements. SPSS<sup>®</sup> provides a range of reliability methods –

Cronbach's alpha, a model of internal consistency, based on the average inter-item correlation; 'Split-half', a method of dividing the scale into two parts, and examining the correlation between them; The Guttman quotient, which defines lower bounds for true reliability; Parallel, a method which assumes that all items have equal variances and equal error variances across replications; Strict parallel, making similar assumptions to the parallel method, but also assumes equal means across items.

In scholarly research, Cronbach's alpha is a commonly preferred reliability coefficient, and is used in this study. The coefficient ranges from 0.00 to 1.00. The closer the coefficient is to 1.00, the more reliable or rigorous the heading or scale. No standard tables set guidelines for appropriate magnitudes for the Alpha coefficient, and many reported studies take, as a threshold, coefficients of 0.60 and above. The present research adopts a fairly rigorous threshold of approximately 0.65 and higher.

The reliability coefficients for each of the study scales are reported in the table below. The majority of the scales reach the 0.65 threshold (following scale reversals where appropriate). Each of the scores for each respondent within these scales are then summed and divided by the number of items in each scale in order to produce a scale score for each respondent.

**Table 41 Cronbach Alpha for Questionnaire Scales**

<b>Scale</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient</b>
Leadership Performance	0.73
Strategic Leadership – The Cabinet Team	0.85
Cohesive Top Team	0.79
Pulling Together	0.83
Diverse Top Team	0.73
Autonomy	0.68
Communication – Authority Input	0.77
Communication – Personal Input	0.85
Customer Focus	0.69
Attention to Customer Care	0.80
Independence	0.79
Discipline	0.70
Job Satisfaction	0.84
Authority Culture	0.88
Issues Relating to Role (Members & Officers)	0.30
Issues Relating to Role (Members)	0.49
The Political Group (Members & Officers)	0.73
The Political Group (Members)	-
The Cabinet Team – Decision Making Capability	0.40

There are four scales where the Cronbach's alpha falls below the threshold: Issues relating to role (members and officers/members); the political group (members) – although there are only two items within this scale; and the cabinet team – decision making. A low alpha coefficient suggests low confidence in what it is we are trying to measure. In such cases, it is best to treat items as individual measures, and work on the development of these scales for future research.

Table 42 Ranked Cronbach Alpha Scores

<b>Scale</b>	<b>Alpha</b>
Authority Culture	0.88
Communication - personal input	0.85
Strategic Leadership	0.85
Job Satisfaction	0.84
Pulling Together	0.83
Attention to Customer Care	0.8
Cohesive Top Team	0.79
Independence	0.79
Communication - Authority Input	0.77
Diverse Top Team	0.73
Leadership Performance	0.73
Political Group Understanding and Influence - Member and Officer	0.73
Discipline	0.7
Customer Focus	0.69
Autonomy	0.68
Role Issues – members	0.49
Cabinet Team - decision making	0.4
Role Issues - member and officer	0.3
Political Group Understanding and Influence- Member only	0

The higher the Alpha result for the scale, the greater the reliability of the scale itself. The table above has been sorted in descending order to demonstrate the relative strength of reliability of the scales.

Thus, in terms of the validity of the amended questionnaire it, with the exception of the four scales mentioned above, the scales which benefit from prior validation in other studies relating to differing contexts, including Kakabadse and Kakabadse (1999), Myers and Kakabadse (2001) and Giacchino and Kakabadse (2003) can be seen to hold valid in the local government context.

We must next consider the significance of these constructs in relation to our dependent variable, Leadership Performance (both positive and negative), taking the previously described Hypotheses.

### 8.5.4 Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis attempts to draw out statistical relationships or associations between variables. These correlation coefficients range in value from -1.00 to 1.00, where a negative value represents a negative correlation, described as a negative relationship between two variables. Hence, an increase in value of one variable would lead to a decrease in the value of the second variable.

Conversely, a positive value denotes a positive correlation, and a positive relationship between two given variables. This would result in a high score in one variable being matched by a similarly high score in the second variable.

The table on page 239, labelled on the page below, shows the results of the correlation analysis between variables, highlighting a range of correlations with significance levels at the  $p < 0.01$  and  $p < 0.05$  levels.

However, examination of said coefficients, whilst reinforcing much of the above discussion, does little to add value to the analysis so far.

**Table Opposite shows results of Correlation Analysis →**

Correlations

		Age	Years in current job	Number of employees	Leadership Performance	Job Satisfaction	Strategic Leadership	Cohesive Top Team	Pulling Together	Diverse Top Team	The Political Group - Members and Officers	Autonomy	Communication - Authority Input	Communication - Personal Input	Customer Focus	Attention to Customer Care	Discipline	Independence	Authority Culture
Age	Pearson Correlation	1	.355**	-.028	.179*	-.056	.076	.030	-.058	-.199*	.130	-.089	-.050	.138	.183*	-.099	.117	.193*	.030
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.732	.027	.491	.354	.714	.479	.014	.113	.278	.542	.091	.025	.225	.152	.017	.717
	N	152	152	151	152	151	152	151	152	152	149	152	151	152	151	151	152	152	152
Years in current job	Pearson Correlation		1	-.159	.168*	.020	.165*	.237**	.095	-.305**	.165*	.132	.135	-.012	.084	.020	.172*	.120	-.009
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.051	.038	.807	.041	.003	.245	.000	.043	.104	.097	.881	.301	.806	.033	.140	.910
	N	152	153	152	153	152	153	152	153	153	150	153	152	153	152	152	153	153	153
Number of employees	Pearson Correlation			1	-.039	.031	-.067	-.093	.050	.039	-.058	.005	-.111	-.048	-.080	.168*	.138	-.129	.031
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.732	.051	.635	.706	.409	.255	.539	.637	.481	.953	.174	.553	.329	.039	.090	.113	.702
	N	151	152	152	152	151	152	151	152	152	149	152	151	152	151	151	152	152	152
Leadership Performance	Pearson Correlation				1	.427**	.672**	.529**	.391**	-.573**	.302**	.255**	.384**	.243**	.330**	-.350**	.193*	-.025	.382**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.027	.038	.635	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.001	.000	.002	.000	.000	.017	.757	.000
	N	152	153	152	153	152	153	152	153	153	150	153	152	153	152	152	153	153	153
Job Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation					1	.553**	.384**	.446**	-.312**	.466**	.396**	.465**	.484**	.356**	-.206*	.059	.034	.615**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.056	.020	.031	.427**	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.011	.473	.679	.000
	N	151	152	151	152	152	152	151	152	152	149	152	151	152	151	151	152	152	152
Strategic Leadership	Pearson Correlation						1	.669**	.548**	-.673**	.452**	.346**	.511**	.396**	.359**	-.453**	.331**	.042	.497**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.354	.041	.409	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.609	.000
	N	152	153	152	153	152	153	152	153	153	150	153	152	153	152	152	153	153	153
Cohesive Top Team	Pearson Correlation							1	.680**	-.674**	.403**	.279**	.525**	.284**	.357**	-.443**	.362**	.079	.367**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.714	.003	.255	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.001	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.336	.000
	N	151	152	151	152	151	152	152	152	152	149	152	151	152	151	151	152	152	152
Pulling Together	Pearson Correlation								1	-.460**	.467**	.451**	.446**	.293**	.423**	-.475**	.388**	.084	.481**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.058	.095	.050	.391**	.446**	.548**	.680**	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.303	.000
	N	152	153	152	153	152	153	152	153	153	150	153	152	153	152	152	153	153	153
Diverse Top Team	Pearson Correlation									1	-.334**	-.225**	-.536**	-.381**	-.316**	.415**	-.451**	-.116	-.232**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.014	.000	.637	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.005	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.154	.004
	N	152	153	152	153	152	153	152	153	153	150	153	152	153	152	152	153	153	153
The Political Group - Members and Officers	Pearson Correlation										1	.307**	.160	.290**	.343**	-.310**	.270**	.131	.397**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.130	.165*	-.058	.302**	.466**	.452**	.403**	.467**	.334**	.000	.052	.000	.000	.000	.001	.109	.000
	N	149	150	149	150	149	150	149	150	150	150	150	149	150	149	149	150	150	150
Autonomy	Pearson Correlation											1	.297**	.211**	.269**	-.277**	.154	.134	.349**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.089	.132	.005	.255**	.396**	.346**	.279**	.451**	-.225**	.307**	.000	.009	.001	.057	.098	.000	.000
	N	152	153	152	153	152	153	152	153	153	150	153	152	153	152	152	153	153	153
Communication - Authority Input	Pearson Correlation												1	.408**	.499**	-.409**	.237**	-.030	.443**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.050	.135	-.111	.384**	.465**	.511**	.525**	.446**	-.536**	.160	.297**	.000	.000	.000	.003	.718	.000
	N	151	152	151	152	151	152	151	152	152	152	149	152	152	152	151	152	152	152
Communication - Personal Input	Pearson Correlation													1	.396**	-.176*	-.008	.184*	.515**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.138	-.012	-.048	.243**	.484**	.396**	.284**	.293**	-.381**	.290**	.211**	.408**	.000	.030	.921	.023	.000
	N	152	153	152	153	152	153	152	153	153	150	153	152	152	153	152	153	153	153
Customer Focus	Pearson Correlation														1	-.566**	.342**	.095	.504**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.183*	.084	-.080	.330**	.356**	.359**	.357**	.423**	-.316**	.343**	.269**	.499**	.396**	.000	.000	.245	.000
	N	151	152	151	152	151	152	151	152	152	149	152	151	152	152	151	152	152	152
Attention to Customer Care	Pearson Correlation															1	-.375**	.024	-.287**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.099	.020	.168*	-.350**	-.206*	-.453**	-.443**	-.475**	.415**	-.310**	-.277**	-.409**	-.176*	.566**	.000	.767	.000
	N	151	152	151	152	151	152	151	152	152	149	152	151	152	151	152	152	152	152
Discipline	Pearson Correlation																1	.086	.169*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.117	.172*	.138	.193*	.059	.331**	.362**	.388**	-.451**	.270**	.154	.237**	-.008	.342**	-.375**	.000	.036
	N	152	153	152	153	152	153	152	153	153	150	153	152	153	152	152	153	153	153
Independence	Pearson Correlation																	1	.101
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.193*	.120	-.129	-.025	.034	.042	.079	.084	-.116	.131	.134	-.030	.184*	.095	.024	.086	.213
	N	152	153	152	153	152	153	152	153	153	150	153	152	153	152	152	153	153	153
Authority Culture	Pearson Correlation																		1
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.030	-.009	.031	.382**	.615**	.497**	.367**	.481**	-.232**	.397**	.349**	.443**	.515**	.504**	-.287**	.169*	.000
	N	152	153	152	153	152	153	152	153	153	150	153	152	153	152	152	153	153	153

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

## 8.5.5 Multiple Linear Regression

Regression analysis estimates linear relationships and shows the influence that one or more independent variables or covariates exert on dependent variables. In effect, the analysis predicts how the values of independent variables determine the value of a dependent variable.

### 8.5.5.1 Demographic Variables

#### Hypothesis 1:

*Demographic variables in isolation (length of tenure, age, member of cabinet team, political context) have a significant impact on leadership performance.*

The tabulation below suggests that ‘Are you a member of the Cabinet (or other) Team’ is the only one of these demographic variables that has a significant effect on ‘Leadership Performance’. For these variables, the statistical significance level is below the threshold level of 0.050. We can therefore, partially accept this hypothesis.

In the study, members of the Cabinet (or other) Team rate Leadership Performance at 4.43, significantly higher than non-members (4.17).



### Coefficients(a)

**Table 43 Regression, Demography**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4.429	.304		14.567	.000
	Age	.036	.047	.069	.774	.440
	Years in this authority/Years in current job	.029	.026	.097	1.110	.269
	<b>Are you a member of the Cabinet (or other) Team</b>	<b>-.230</b>	<b>.080</b>	<b>-.245</b>	<b>-2.869</b>	<b>.005</b>
	Single Party Control	.022	.236	.023	.093	.926
	Hung Council	-.059	.249	-.050	-.237	.813
	Multi-Party Cabinet	-.109	.264	-.070	-.411	.681

a Dependent Variable: Leadership Performance

In addition, SPSS<sup>®</sup> calculates ‘goodness-of-fit’ for the linear model, sometimes called the ‘coefficient of determination’. The R Square ( $R^2$ ) is the proportion of variation in the dependent variable explained by the regression model, and a significant indicator in the present research. It ranges in value from 0 to 1. Small values indicate that the model does not fit the data well. In the example, the conclusion is that 10.9 percent of the dependent variable is explained by the regression model – a fairly low coefficient, which suggests that leadership performance is likely to be explained by other variables also, not just demographic variables.

### Model Summary

**Table 44 R Squared, Demography**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.330(a)	.109	.070	.39959

a Predictors: (Constant), Multi-Party Cabinet, Age, Hung Council, Are you a member of the Cabinet (or other) Team, Years in this authority/Years in current job, Single Party Control

## **8.5.5.2 Role and Job Satisfaction**

### **8.5.5.2.1 Role**

#### Hypothesis 2a:

*Perceptions and understanding of role have a significant impact on leadership performance.*

The reliability analysis did not give us items that were robust enough to form a scale, so each of the items relating to role (members and officers, members) were entered into the model individually.

The following table shows that ‘We spend time on formal (bureaucratic) Council processes’, ‘Salary is a barrier to greater engagement in my Council Roles’, ‘Electoral timescales create a short term imperative for delivery of objectives’ all have a significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) impact on leadership performance – bureaucracy and short term delivery of objectives have a negative impact on leadership performance.

**Coefficients(a)**

**Table 45 Regression, Role**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4.670	.373		12.533	.000
	<b>We spend time on formal (bureaucratic) Council Processes</b>	<b>-.133</b>	<b>.059</b>	<b>-.331</b>	<b>-2.260</b>	<b>.028</b>
	We spend time on civic engagement activities	.058	.049	.158	1.177	.244
	My role involves dealing with operational issues	-.031	.038	-.106	-.816	.418
	Work- life balance is an issue for me	-.005	.037	-.016	-.127	.899
	Members take sole responsibility when things go wrong	.023	.034	.084	.659	.512
	<b>Salary is a barrier to greater engagement in my Council Roles</b>	<b>.079</b>	<b>.032</b>	<b>.348</b>	<b>2.460</b>	<b>.017</b>
	<b>Electoral Timescales create a short term imperative for delivery of objectives</b>	<b>-.076</b>	<b>.033</b>	<b>-.324</b>	<b>-2.305</b>	<b>.025</b>
	Political will and determination is a critical factor in achieving delivery	.041	.065	.080	.630	.531

a Dependent Variable: Leadership Performance

The model summary shows that 24.8% of Leadership Performance is accounted for by the independent variables.

**Table 46 R Squared, Role****Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.498(a)	.248	.144	.29533

a Predictors: (Constant), Political will and determination is a critical factor in achieving delivery, We spend time on civic engagement activities, Work- life balance is an issue for me , Members take sole responsibility when things go wrong, My role involves dealing with operational issues, Electoral Timescales create a short term imperative for delivery of objectives, Salary is a barrier to greater engagement in my Council Roles , We spend time on formal (bureaucratic) Council Processes

#### 8.5.5.2.2 *Job Satisfaction*

##### Hypothesis 2b:

*Job satisfaction has a significant impact on leadership performance.*

Job satisfaction has a significant ( $p < 0.001$ ) positive impact on Leadership Performance (see table below).

**Table 47 Regression, Job Satisfaction****Coefficients(a)**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.868	.260		11.034	.000
	<b>Job Satisfaction</b>	<b>.346</b>	<b>.060</b>	<b>.427</b>	<b>5.790</b>	<b>.000</b>

a Dependent Variable: Leadership Performance

The model summary shows that 18.3% of Leadership Performance is accounted for by Job Satisfaction.

**Table 48 R Squared, Job Satisfaction****Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.427(a)	.183	.177	.37024

a Predictors: (Constant), Job Satisfaction

### 8.5.5.3 Strategic Leadership Ability and Cabinet Decision Making Capability

#### 8.5.5.3.1 Strategic Leadership

##### Hypothesis 3a:

*Strategic leadership has a significant impact on leadership performance.*

The following table shows that effective strategic leadership amongst the Cabinet Team has a high significant impact ( $p < 0.001$ ) on Leadership Performance. To a lesser extent, a top team that has diverse views has a significant negative impact ( $p < 0.05$ ) on Leadership Performance.

**Coefficients(a)****Table 49 Regression, Strategic Leadership Ability**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.698	.422		6.389	.000
	<b>Strategic Leadership</b>	<b>.418</b>	<b>.074</b>	<b>.501</b>	<b>5.631</b>	<b>.000</b>
	Cohesive Top Team	.075	.086	.089	.876	.383
	Pulling Together	-.027	.070	-.032	-.385	.701
	<b>Diverse Top Team</b>	<b>-.112</b>	<b>.052</b>	<b>-.188</b>	<b>-2.132</b>	<b>.035</b>

a Dependent Variable: Leadership Performance

To a fairly high extent (R-Square =0.477) leadership performance is explained by these independent variables.

#### Model Summary

**Table 50 R Squared, Strategic Leadership Ability**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.690(a)	.477	.462	.29800

a Predictors: (Constant), Diverse Top Team, Pulling Together, Strategic Leadership, Cohesive Top Team

#### **8.5.5.3.2 Cabinet Decision Making Capability**

##### Hypothesis 3b:

*Elements of cabinet decision making capability have a significant impact on leadership performance.*

The following table shows that the statement ‘The quality of decision making at Cabinet Team is high’ has a high significant impact ( $p < 0.001$ ) on Leadership Performance.

The only other variable that has a significant negative impact ( $p < 0.05$ ) on Leadership Performance is ‘Decisions are made behind closed doors’.

**Coefficients(a)**

**Table 51 Regression, Cabinet Decision Making Ability**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.645	.272		13.416	.000
	I use my heart as much as my head when deciding what to do next	-.018	.031	-.043	-.585	.560
	<b>The quality of decision making at Cabinet Team is high</b>	<b>.230</b>	<b>.045</b>	<b>.398</b>	<b>5.141</b>	<b>.000</b>
	I like to get my own way	.001	.037	.002	.031	.975
	I support most of the decisions made by the Cabinet Team	.024	.046	.042	.528	.598
	<b>Decisions are made behind closed doors</b>	<b>-.073</b>	<b>.032</b>	<b>-.172</b>	<b>-2.263</b>	<b>.025</b>
	Decisions here seem to be changed from one day to the next	-.032	.036	-.067	-.896	.372
	Checking out my plans with others slows me down rather than adds anything of value	-.087	.052	-.139	-1.672	.097
	I dislike others trying to alter my views	.057	.052	.093	1.097	.275
	There is a right and a wrong way of doing things	.007	.032	.018	.226	.821

a. Dependent Variable: Leadership Performance

28.4% of the dependent variable is explained by these variables.

**Table 52 R Squared, Cabinet Decision Making Ability**

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.533(a)	.284	.238	.35486

a Predictors: (Constant), There is a right and a wrong way of doing things, Checking out my plans with others slows me down rather than adds anything of value, I use my heart as much as my head when deciding what to do next, I like to get my own way, The quality of decision making at Cabinet Team is high, Decisions here seem to be changed from one day to the next, Decisions are made behind closed doors, I support most of the decisions made by the Cabinet Team, I dislike others trying to alter my views

#### **8.5.5.4 Understanding and Influencing Political Group Processes**

Hypothesis 4:

*Understanding and influencing political group processes have a significant impact on leadership performance.*

The following table shows that members' and officers' understanding and influence of political group processes can have a significant positive impact on Leadership Performance ( $p < 0.01$ ). Other aspects relating to members only do not have a significant impact.



### Coefficients(a)

**Table 53 Political Group Understanding and Influence**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.089	.465		6.636	.000
	<b>The Political Group - Members and Officers</b>	<b>.358</b>	<b>.118</b>	<b>.476</b>	<b>3.022</b>	<b>.004</b>
	I feel able to openly contribute to Political Group discussions	-.015	.061	-.034	-.251	.803
	Some members of the Political Group have far more influence than me	.009	.048	.026	.188	.852

a. Dependent Variable: Leadership Performance

20.1% of the dependent variable is explained by these variables.

**Table 54 Political Group Understanding and Influence**

### Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.448(a)	.201	.162	.29478

a. Predictors: (Constant), Some members of the Political Group have far more influence than me, I feel able to openly contribute to Political Group discussions, The Political Group - Members and Officers

## 8.5.5.5 Context

### Hypothesis 5:

*Context has a significant impact on leadership performance.*

The following table shows that ‘Communication – Authority Input’ is the only independent context variable that has a significant positive impact ( $p < 0.05$ ) on Leadership Performance.

**Table 55 Regression, Communication - Authority Input**  
**Coefficients(a)**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.801	.558		5.025	.000
	Autonomy	.044	.060	.058	.726	.469
	<b>Communication - Authority Input</b>	<b>.196</b>	<b>.086</b>	<b>.209</b>	<b>2.271</b>	<b>.025</b>
	Communication - Personal Input	.091	.077	.103	1.186	.238
	Customer Focus	.045	.080	.058	.562	.575
	Attention to Customer Care	-.098	.059	-.159	-1.661	.099
	Discipline	.066	.084	.066	.791	.430

a Dependent Variable: Leadership Performance

20.4% of the dependent variable is explained by these variables.

**Table 56 R Squared, Communication - Authority Input**  
**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.451(a)	.204	.170	.36635

a Predictors: (Constant), Discipline, Communication - Personal Input, Autonomy, Attention to Customer Care, Communication - Authority Input, Customer Focus

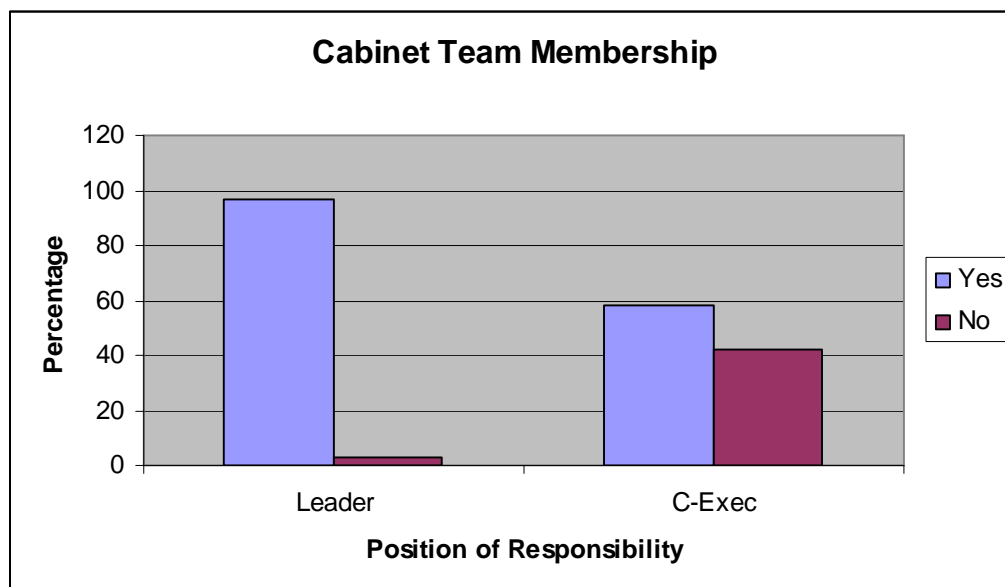
## **8.6 Discussion of Results**

This section takes each of the constructs in turn, and explores the resultant analysis described in the previous chapter.

### 8.6.1 Demographics

Hypothesis H1 postulates that Demographic variables in isolation have a significant impact on the dependent variable, Leadership Performance. The only demographic variable that has a significant effect on leadership performance ( $p < 0.005$ ) is membership of the Cabinet Team.

This places greater importance on the response to the question “Are you part of the Cabinet Team (or equivalent), to which 26.2% replied “no”. The position worsens when we look at the clustered responses, with only 58% of Chief Executives feeling members of the Cabinet Team, against 97% of Leaders.



**Figure 13 Cabinet Team Membership**

This becomes more important when linked to the guidance for Modernising Local Authorities which describes a position of joint legitimacy for leadership, and a shared responsibility for strategic leadership between officers and members at the point of the joint Cabinet Team.

Given the strong body of demographic literature (Pfeffer, 1983; Wagner, Pfeffer and O'Reilly, 1984), it is interesting that the results infer lower levels of significance to homogeneity and heterogeneity than to the issue of Top Team membership. Indeed,

the regression analysis provides a low significance score, namely  $p < 0.269$ , not valid for this study.

However, the regression analysis does provide an R Squared figure of 0.109, i.e. 10.9% of the dependent variable of leadership performance is explained by demographic variables.

## **8.6.2 Role and Job Satisfaction**

### **8.6.2.1 Role**

Our second hypotheses, H2a, postulated that Perceptions and understanding of role have a significant impact on leadership performance. As demonstrated by analysis, neither of the scales put forward for usage within the questionnaire obtained a high enough Cronbach Alpha Score (joint member and officer alpha 0.49, member only 0.3) to be deemed reliable.

Despite this, research provides strong evidence (Kakabadse and Kakabadse, 1999; Hambrick and Mason, 1984; Jaques, 1951) to suggest that role is an important factor in leadership performance, which would suggest further research into refining the questions of the scales concerned. Practical work undertaken with local authorities through my development role would similarly suggest the concept is important.

When individual items are taken, three of the statements were proven to have significant impact on leadership performance, each at the  $p < 0.05$  level.

Firstly, the concept of short term decision making driven by electoral timescales, a member only role descriptor, has been shown to have a significant negative impact. This statement was drawn directly from the qualitative research undertaken as the first stage of this research.

Practical experience would suggest that this would create a greater diversity of idea within the Cabinet Team, as the driver within authorities at present is to look to

much longer planning cycles, sometimes even generational, and often in partnership with other organisations.

The push that politicians feel to deliver within a four year electoral cycle can produce obvious conflict and divergent direction of travel between officers and members, creating tension as opposed to congruence.

Similarly, engagement in undertaking bureaucratic council processes, a joint member and officer role descriptor, has been shown to have a significant negative impact. As shown through the descriptive statistical analysis, 53.6% of respondents described work-life balance issues. Whilst the reality for members and officers is one of huge time constraints related to high workload, this often proves an even greater workload for members as they also have to manage a “day job”. Hence, the necessity of having to build constituency of idea through a range of separate meetings in line with Council process until a decision is “formally” made, thus increasing the amount of time spent unnecessarily working on an issue, means less time spent on other matters, which can be seen to be detrimental to leadership performance.

The third element of role having a significant impact on leadership performance is the member only descriptor relating to salary being a barrier to engagement. Interestingly, whilst both Wales and Northern Ireland have now adopted a salary basis for those with councillors holding positions of special responsibility within an authority, England has yet to do so.

Especially in district or borough councils, salary levels (or allowance levels) remain low, though still requiring significant amounts of time similar to those of County or Unitary Councils to undertake their role effectively. In turn, this relates to the question of work-life balance raised above, and will have an impact on Job Satisfaction, explored in the next section.

Overall, the individual statements have an R Squared value of 0.248, and hence explain 24.8% of leadership performance. This would support the previous statement that both literature and my own experience would suggest that role was

an important determinant of leadership performance, despite the scale having a low overall reliability level.

This would in turn suggest it is the composition of the scale rather than the significance of role in itself that requires further research.

### **8.6.2.2 Job Satisfaction**

Analysis produced a Cronbach Alpha score of 0.84, providing a high level of reliability for the scale as a whole. We can therefore accept that the statements and questions validated in other contexts are valid in the context of local government given the adjustments made for language and understanding.

Further, the analysis also demonstrated that Hypothesis H2b was supported, namely that Job satisfaction has a significant ( $p < 0.001$ ) positive impact on Leadership Performance.

Instinctively, one knows this to be true, though the level of significance is higher than anticipated. The descriptive statistical analysis also suggested that there was higher agreement over the statements relating to job satisfaction with ones own role as opposed to the morale levels through the organisation.

## **8.6.3 Strategic Leadership and Cabinet Team Decision Making Capability**

### **8.6.3.1 Strategic Leadership Capability**

Hypothesis 3a proposed that Strategic Leadership had a significant impact upon leadership performance. The questionnaire adapted four scales utilised by the Kakabadse instrument, namely Strategic Leadership; Cohesive Top Team; Pulling Together; and Diversity of Ideas.

All four scales when adapted produced a Cronbach Alpha score of greater than 0.6, indeed ranging from 0.73 to 0.85, and have therefore demonstrated reliability within the local authority context.

**Table 57 Strategic Leadership Capability, Summary**

<b>Scale</b>	<b>Alpha</b>	<b>Significance</b>	<b>Average Response</b>
<b>Strategic Leadership</b>	0.85	p<0.001	4.12
<b>Cohesive Top Team</b>	0.79		3.94
<b>Pulling Together</b>	0.83		4.39
<b>Diversity of Ideas</b>	0.73	p<0.05	2.11

Further, two of the scales have been shown to have a significant impact on leadership performance; Strategic Leadership with significance at the p<0.001 level, and Diversity of Ideas having a lower significance at a level of p<0.05.

When taken in conjunction with the earlier descriptive statistical analysis, the high level of significance related to Strategic Leadership suggests that the research findings of Kakabadse and Kakabadse (1999) noting that clear strategic direction, vision and understanding hold equally true in a local government context.

Similarly, the significance of Diversity of Idea comes directly from the Kakabadse and Kakabadse (1999) research, once again confirming that their constructs of needing to deal with sensitive issues; the need for the Cabinet Team to pull in the same direction; and the need for clear cut long term objectives, all hold significance within the local authority setting.

Of importance here are the perceptions expressed in the survey itself. Given the significance of the Diversity of Idea scale, an agreement score of 19.6% to the statement that the Cabinet Team has differing views as to future direction raises

concern. Similar concern is raised with the 20.9% agreement rate to the statement “sensitive issues are not addressed”.

Overall, the composite of the four scales relating to Strategic Leadership described above have a 47.7% impact on leadership performance, demonstrating the central importance of Strategic Leadership, Cohesiveness of the Top Team and Pulling Together, and Diversity of Ideas.

### **8.6.3.2 Cabinet Team Decision Making Capability**

Hypothesis 3b postulates that Cabinet Decision Making as a significant impact on leadership performance. The Cronbach alpha score is 0.4, so the scale cannot be deemed reliable in the local government context as it stands.

However, two individual statements from the scale did prove to have a significant impact on leadership performance.

First, “The quality of decision making at Cabinet Team is high” ( $p < 0.001$ ), which received an 83.6% Agreement Response Rate.

Similarly, “Decisions are made behind closed doors” achieved a significance level of  $p < 0.05$ ; a negatively worded scale, which had a lower level of significance in terms of impact. It received a 12.4% agreement rate.

It should be noted that a contextual reason for this level of response is possibly due to the on-going debate and initial controversy related to the “informal” sessions of Cabinet Teams, often not open to the public, where working papers are discussed, but no decisions taken. These are often described as the strategy sessions for the Cabinet Team, but have come under political attack from opposition groups on local authorities.



Overall, 24.8% of leadership performance is explained by cabinet decision making ability, which therefore represents a factor worthy of further research to obtain a contextually valid scale for the questionnaire.

#### **8.6.4 Understanding and Influencing Political Group Processes**

The hypothesis that Understanding and Influencing Political Group Processes had a significant impact on leadership performance was constructed from two scales, from both a joint member and officer perspective, and also members only.

In terms of scale reliability, the joint member and officer scale achieved a Cronbach alpha score of 0.73, and is therefore valid. The member only scale fell below the 0.6 level, and is therefore rejected.

This is important in terms of research as the questionnaire has a valid scale developed from the qualitative research that has not been utilised in prior research, and for the first time explores the political interface from a member and officer perspective.

Further, regression analysis demonstrated that the scale achieved significance at the  $p < 0.01$  level in terms of its impact on leadership performance.

This result is itself challenging, as despite the significance, little is provided in terms of guidance for authorities on how to align council processes to Group processes, and there is no mention of the political group in legislation.

Here, the construct relating to “the political group is the real focus for policy making”, which received a 47% agreement rate, but also a 30.5% response level for neither agree nor disagree, provides an indicator that this element is often unresolved, even for Leaders and Chief Executives.

Whilst there is no correct answer to the Group / Council process alignment issue, it is certainly one that needs exploration at a local level to provide a clear picture.

Also, from a developmental perspective, there is no training for officers in Group process or respective roles of members. Indeed, there is often no training for members in this process, who often join a group after their election, and go through a process of social integration rather than understanding constitutional aspects.

Elements of the scale are also clearly important, and relate to the role of the Group itself as a community of politicians. For example, the construct surrounding Group having a clear political vision; the relationship between the Group vision and the manifesto; members of the Group being aware of the big picture. If the role of members is one of policy direction, how can they achieve this without these issues being explored?

For example, whilst 80.6% of Leaders agree that the political Group provides a clear vision, only 58.14% of Chief Executives are in agreement. So whilst Leaders feel they are providing that policy drive, Chief Executives clearly desire greater input at this level. Given the Chief Executives relative closeness to the politicians compared to other, even senior, officers, this level of difference would likely increase the further from the points of Leader and Chief Executive we move.

The regression analysis produced an R Squared score of 0.201, demonstrating that 20.1% of leadership performance can be explained by Understanding and Influencing group Processes as understood by members and officers.

### **8.6.5 Context**

The hypothesis that Context had a significant impact on leadership performance utilised a number of scales from the Kakabadse questionnaire, namely Autonomy; Independence; Discipline; Communication – Authority; Communication – personal; Customer Focus; and Attention to Customer Care.

All of these scales proved to have reliability under the Cronbach alpha test, and can therefore be utilised within the local government context.

However, the only scale that produced a level of significance related to Communication at the Authority level, with a significance level of  $p < 0.05$ .

From both literature and experience, communication, or “getting the message across” as the jargon describes it, is central to achieving consensus and undertaking a change process. Once again, there is little provided, especially for members, in terms of guidance or development in this area.

#### **8.6.6 Authority Culture**

The only aim of this research was to test the reliability of this scale in the local authority context for use with further research. The scale produced an alpha score of 0.88, and is therefore accepted.

## 8.7 Demographic Clusters

### 8.7.1 Cluster Analysis based on Position

The following table shows an analysis of the responses to questions, clustered by position, namely Leader or Chief Executive, also described as the difference in response between member and officer.

**Table 58 Role Position - Cluster Analysis**

Scale	Leader	Chief Executive	Difference	Significance
The Political group (Officers and members)	4.07	3.76	0.31	p<0.01
Leadership Performance	4.5	4.26	0.24	
Discipline	3.79	3.6	0.19	
Customer Focus	3.95	3.79	0.16	
Cohesive Top Team	4.02	3.87	0.15	
Strategic Leadership	4.2	4.06	0.14	p<0.001
Pulling Together	4.44	4.34	0.1	
Independence	2.91	2.82	0.09	
Authority Culture	4.49	4.53	-0.04	
Communication - personal	4.34	4.39	-0.05	
Job Satisfaction	4.27	4.36	-0.09	p<0.001
Autonomy	3.98	4.09	-0.11	
Communication - authority	3.85	3.98	-0.13	p<0.05
Attention to Customer Care	1.99	2.17	-0.18	
Diverse Top team	1.94	2.25	-0.31	p<0.05

Difference in response is calculated by subtracting the average response of the Chief Executive on a scale from the average response of the leader. The table also shows the level of significance of those scales.

The analysis for Job Satisfaction, a highly significant factor (p<0.001), demonstrates a great deal of congruence of response between Leaders and Chief executives (a difference in average response of only 0.09).

However, Political Group Understanding and Influence, another highly significant factor in terms of leadership performance (also  $p < 0.001$ ) shows greater difference in average, with Leaders giving on average a 0.31 higher response. Instinctively we know this should be the case, given that Leaders (by definition) lead the political group, whilst officers are not members of the group, and indeed are rarely invited to observe or participate in Group meetings. It does, therefore, raise a matter for consideration in terms of development for officers.

Similarly, the scale relating to Diversity of Idea (significance  $p < 0.05$ ) shows a difference in average response, this time with Chief executives showing an average response rate of 0.31 higher than Leaders. This would suggest that Chief Executives feel to a greater level that the Cabinet Team has greater levels of difference of idea, and an inability to raise and deal with sensitive issues, deemed critical factor in the Kakabadse & Kakabadse (1999) research.

Also, given the homogeneity of the sample respondents (83% male, 77.6% between age 40 and 60), it is likely that this diversity does arise out of position as opposed to other demographic factor.

### **8.7.2 Summary of Regression Results**

The following table summarises the constructs that have a significant impact on leadership performance.

As we can see, the elements showing greatest level of significance are Strategic Leadership; Quality of Cabinet Team decision-making; and Job Satisfaction, all at  $p < 0.001$ . The demographic element Member of “Cabinet Team” demonstrates a  $p < 0.005$  level of significance.

The subsequent table shows the R Squared score relating particular scales to leadership performance, denoting the percentage impact that the particular construct has on leadership performance.

The highest R Squared score relates to Strategic Leadership, which as a scale explains 47.7% of leadership performance. Interestingly, as drawn out previously, the question as to whether an individual feels part of the Cabinet Team carries a 10.9% impact level of leadership performance.

**Table 59 Scale Significance**

Scale	Element	Significance
Demographics	Member of Cabinet Team	P<0.005
Role (Cllr & officer)	Bureaucratic Processes (-ve)	P<0.05
Role (Cllr only)	Salary as a barrier (-ve)	P<0.05
Role (Cllr only)	Electoral cycle / s.t. decisions	P<0.05
Job Satisfaction	The Scale	P<0.001
Strategic Leadership	Strategic Leadership	P<0.001
Strategic Leadership	Diversity of Ideas (-ve)	P<0.05
Cabinet Decisions	Quality of Decision Making	P<0.001
Cabinet Decisions	Secret Decisions (-ve)	P<0.05
Group Understanding	The Scale	P<0.01
Context	Communication - Authority	P<0.05

**Table 60 R Squared, Significant Scales**

Scale	R Squared / %
Demographics	0.109 / 10.9%
Role (Cllr & officer)	0.248 / 24.8%
Job Satisfaction	0.183 / 18.3%
Strategic Leadership	0.477 / 47.7%
Cabinet Decisions	0.284 / 28.4%
Group Understanding	0.201 / 20.1%
Context	0.204 / 20.4%

## **8.8 Pursuing Understanding – Further Analysis**

The research of Project 3 was designed for two purposes. Firstly, to explore the validity of the amended questionnaire derived from Project 2. Secondly, to obtain a more detailed understanding of local government leadership performance.

### **8.8.1 Role and the Cronbach Alpha**

The Cronbach alpha score (section 7.5.3) was utilised to test the internal validity of the scales held within the amended questionnaire. The methodology demonstrated that all but four scales demonstrated an alpha score in excess of 0.60, allowing a description of scale validity.

However, one of the constructs, that of role, did not obtain such a score. Role has, however, been described both in literature (Kakabadse and Kakabadse, 1999; Hambrick and Mason, 1984; Jaques, 1951) as being of significance. Further, the regression analysis suggests that elements of role are of significance (section 7.7.2). This was similarly borne out in the model drawn from the qualitative interviews in Project 1.

As a result, it appears worthwhile in testing remaining elements for the existence of a scale with internal validity, with specific reference to Members roles given their high level of discretion. The following constructs were chosen based upon their level of significance as derived from the regression analysis: Spending time on bureaucratic processes; spending time on civic activities; my role involves operational activities; salary is a barrier to engagement; and electoral timescales create a short term imperative.

When tested, the scale produced a Cronbach Alpha score of 0.64, and hence produces a construct for Role Influence that has achieved internal validity. We can now utilise such a scale for further statistical analysis, and later research.

### **8.8.2 Pursuing Greater Understanding**

Whilst the utilisation of the Cronbach Alpha did allow us to test the validity of the amended questionnaire, with internal validity being achieved on all but four of the scales, it did not allow us to draw further conclusions about the understanding of leadership in the local government context.

The quantitative analysis utilised in Project 3 has followed a path. We began with a range of descriptive statistical analyses, which demonstrated the spectrum of responses received, and allowed a number of basic conclusions to be drawn.

This was followed by an analysis of Correlation Coefficients, which produced a wide range of significant relationships – so wide that drawing inference or trend was impossible.

This led to a regression analysis, which demonstrated that a number of variables did indeed hold a significant influence on leadership performance as per section 7.7.2.

Whilst this is useful, the wide range of variables under consideration by definition means that key relationships may still be disguised. Therefore, I propose to utilise a further methodology, that of Partial Correlation Analysis, to further expose key relationships that have been suggested by literature and qualitative interview.

### **8.8.3 Partial Correlation Analysis – A Methodology**

A researcher may wish to determine the strength of the relationship between two variables when the effect of other variables has been removed. One way to accomplish this is by computing a partial correlation, which removes the effect of one or more variables from a correlation.

For example, sociologists and economists often use this approach to examine the relationship between, say, income and education after controlling for IQ.

Presumably smart people make more money and smart people are better educated.

But does education add value to one's income over and above what



is explained by IQ? This type of argument leads quickly to causal statements which, whilst not strictly sound, are better than claiming that education alone causes high income.

### **8.8.3.1 Refining the question**

The purpose of this research has been consistent, namely to find and explore those elements that have a significant impact on leadership performance in top teams in local government.

The initial literature review and qualitative interviews produced an initial model of perceptions of leadership constructs. Regression analysis was utilised to elicit those elements that have a significant impact on leadership performance, namely Membership of Cabinet Team; elements of role; job satisfaction; Strategic Leadership Ability; Diversity of Ideas; elements of Cabinet Decision making; Group Understanding; and Authority Communication.

However, the real theme of this research is that of team development. As such, there is need to further refine the question. Whilst it is apparent from the research so far that there are a number of elements that all good teams will have, what is truly critical?

The Kakabadse research (1999), which has provided the guiding framework for this research, has consistently demonstrated that strategic leadership ability, top team cohesion, and contextual issues relating to decision making are important.

Regression analysis in this research has validated the significance of these constructs in the local government context. Indeed, the construct with the greatest level of impact upon leadership performance according to the regression analysis is that of strategic leadership capability, explaining 47.7% of leadership performance, and having a significance of  $p < 0.001$ .

But what are the key relationships? Is it about role, title and position; group involvement; function; or actively engaging and fostering a team approach? It is these questions that partial correlation will help us answer.

## **8.8.4 The Analysis**

### **8.8.4.1 Exploring Strategic Leadership Ability**

As noted above, the highest R squared level in the regression analysis was Strategic Leadership, providing a 47.7% explanation factor for leadership performance. Similarly, Strategic Leadership demonstrated a  $p < 0.001$  significance level in this regard.

This ability was demonstrated as a critical leadership factor in the Kakabadse (1999) research, but has been strongly reflected in much of the leadership theory explored within the literature review undertaken at the outset of this research. Bass (193fi85) described the need to articulate a vision. Indeed, the classification of literature into schools of thought undertaken in Chapter 5 included a Strategic Leadership School (Chapter 5.2.2.5) notably including work by Boal & Hooijberg (2001) which provided a focus upon making strategic decisions, and linking these to creating and communicating vision.

Therefore, a starting point for the further analysis, in terms of the overarching theme of team development, is to test the strength of the relationship between Strategic Leadership Ability, Communication (Personal) and Cohesiveness of the Top Team. The question could be described in terms of exploring whether, given the significance of Strategic Leadership on Leadership Performance, is it really communication on an individual basis that is important, or is the cohesiveness of the top team and team process more significant in this respect?

The following table (Table 61, Correlation 1) shows the results of the correlation between these elements. As we can see, there is a significant correlation between Strategic Leadership Ability and both the Cohesiveness of the Top Team and Personal

Communication, both at the  $p < 0.01$  level. However, the strength of the correlation is greater between Strategic Leadership and Cohesiveness of the Top Team (0.669) than Personal Communication (0.396). This would suggest that whilst entering into dialogue on an individual level is a significant factor, the process and relations within a team are of greater importance. Dialogue on its own is not enough.

## Partial Correlation Results

**Table 61 Correlation 1** Correlations

		Strategic Leadership	Cohesive Top Team	Communication - Personal Input
Strategic Leadership	Pearson Correlation	1	.669(**)	.396(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	153	152	153
Cohesive Top Team	Pearson Correlation	.669(**)	1	.284(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	152	152	152
Communication - Personal Input	Pearson Correlation	.396(**)	.284(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	153	152	153

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Table 62 Partial Correlation 1**

Controlling for Political Group Understanding

### Correlations

Control Variables			Strategic Leadership	Cohesive Top Team	Communication - Personal Input
The Political Group - Members and Officers	Strategic Leadership	Correlation	1.000	.601***	.307***
		Significance (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000
		Df	0	146	146
	Cohesive Top Team	Correlation	.601***	1.000	.186*
		Significance (2-tailed)	.000	.	.023
		Df	146	0	146
	Communication - Personal Input	Correlation	.307***	.186*	1.000
		Significance (2-tailed)	.000	.023	.
		Df	146	146	0

\*\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed).

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

However, the Leadership Model that emerged from the qualitative interviews of Project 1 demonstrated that the understanding and ability to influence group processes were important. This was validated through the later regression analysis, where the associated scale demonstrated a  $p < 0.01$  significance of impact on leadership performance. Indeed, the R squared result was 0.201, or a 20.1% explanation factor for leadership performance.

Given this level of significance, it could be postulated that undertaking a partial correlation analysis based on the correlation outlined above, factoring for Political Process, would produce significantly lower correlation levels. However, the previous table demonstrates that this is not the case.

We can see that the correlation coefficients do indeed go down in strength from the initial correlation table, suggesting that Political Group Understanding does have an impact on the associations between Strategic Leadership, Cohesive Top Team and Communication (Personal Input).

However, the reduction in strength is not great, namely a reduction from 0.669 and 0.396, to 0.601 and 0.307 for Cohesiveness of Top Team and Communication respectively.

Thus, we have a position where the key relationship with Strategic Leadership Ability in this context is one of actively pursuing team dynamics and relationships, rather than personal communication. Further, that whilst the political process and its understanding are indeed significant in the overall picture, once again it is of secondary importance compared to team dynamics.

#### **8.8.4.2 Exploring the Cohesiveness of the Top Team**

So far, regression analysis has demonstrated that Strategic Leadership Ability has the greatest impact upon Leadership Performance, both in terms of significance and predictive (R squared) terms.

Correlation analysis has further shown that whilst personal communication has a significant bearing on that Strategic Leadership Ability, it is in-fact the cohesiveness of the Top Team and a focus on team dynamics that has a greater significance.

Indeed, this still holds true when factoring out the impact of a further significant factor, namely the understanding of political group process, and the ability to influence them.

This leads us to pursue an exploration of the real drivers of this Top Team dynamic- what is it that successful Top Teams in Local Government actively do to promote this cohesiveness? The Kakabadse (1999) research suggests that it is an active pursuit of being mutually supportive and managing diversity of idea, together with a level of satisfaction with job that is important.

When we look at the regression analysis, we see that whilst Diversity of Ideas does have a significant impact on leadership performance ( $p < 0.05$ ), the scale relating to Pulling Together does not.

Further, Hambrick and Mason (1984) and the work of Jaques (1951) would suggest that role factors are important. The notion of role is also echoed in the guiding framework for this research, that of Kakabadse and Kakabadse (1999).

The resultant correlation analysis (Table 63, Correlation Analysis 2) is shown in the table below.

**Table 63 Correlation 2**

		<b>Correlations</b>				
		Cohesive Top Team	Pulling Together	Diverse Top Team	Job Satisfaction	Issues Relating to Role
Cohesive Top Team	Pearson Correlation	1	.680(**)	-.674(**)	.384(**)	-.278(*)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.023
	N	152	152	152	151	67
Pulling Together	Pearson Correlation	.680(**)	1	-.460(**)	.446(**)	-.136
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.274
	N	152	153	153	152	67
Diverse Top Team	Pearson Correlation	-.674(**)	-.460(**)	1	-.312(**)	.452(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	152	153	153	152	67
Job Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.384(**)	.446(**)	-.312(**)	1	-.079
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.527
	N	151	152	152	152	67
Issues Relating to Role	Pearson Correlation	-.278(*)	-.136	.452(**)	-.079	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.023	.274	.000	.527	
	N	67	67	67	67	67

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Once again, this table shows that there are significant correlations between many of the constructs explored, with a  $p < 0.01$  level of significance of correlation for all elements with Cohesive Top Team with the exception of Role, which demonstrates a  $p < 0.05$  significance level.

Indeed, when we take the strength of correlation, we see that the strongest correlations with Cohesiveness of Top Team exists with Pulling Together and working with Diversity of Idea (0.680 and 0.674 respectively), with Job Satisfaction demonstrating a lower level of correlation (0.384).

This reinforces the importance of the team and team dynamics in terms of driving forward cohesion within the Top Team. Job Satisfaction, whilst not as important to Cohesion as Pulling Together and Diversity of Idea, still remains a significant factor, demonstrated both here in terms of correlation, but also in the regression analysis (it has a  $p < 0.001$  significance in terms of leadership performance). Thus, an individual

having purpose in their role outside of the team continues to warrant attention, further validating the outcomes of the Kakabadse and Kakabadse work (1999) in terms of its relevance to the local government context.

The regression analysis also concluded that perceived Membership of the Cabinet Team by an individual also has a significant ( $p < 0.005$ ) impact upon leadership performance. But does this construct have a significant correlation with Cohesiveness and the relationships outlined above?

This is tested with a further partial correlation analysis based on the above correlation, thought controlling for the effect of Cabinet Team Membership. Clearly, although there results show a lower level of correlation across the board, the effect is minimal.

Once again, this suggests that from our perspective of team leadership, whilst perceptions of role and position are important factors, it is rather team dynamics and processes that hold the key to cohesiveness of the Top Team, and thus to Strategic Leadership and Leadership Performance.

Described in simplistic terms, this research suggests that building a team, and focusing on how team members work together and support each other, have a greater significance on Strategic Leadership Ability and Leadership performance than definitions of role, function or position, either as a member of the Cabinet Team or power with the Political Group.

**Table 64 Partial Correlation Analysis 2**  
**Controlling for Cabinet Team Membership**

**Correlations**

Control Variables			Cohesive Top Team	Pulling Together	Diverse Top Team	Job Satisfaction	Issues Relating to Role
Are you a member of the Cabinet (or other) Team	Cohesive Top Team	Correlation	1.000	.660***	-.607***	.412**	-.224
		Significance (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.001	.071
		df	0	64	64	64	64
	Pulling Together	Correlation	.660***	1.000	-.575***	.531***	-.213
		Significance (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000	.086
		df	64	0	64	64	64
	Diverse Top Team	Correlation	-.607***	-.575***	1.000	-.288*	.360**
		Significance (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.019	.003
		df	64	64	0	64	64
	Job Satisfaction	Correlation	.412**	.531***	-.288*	1.000	.085
		Significance (2-tailed)	.001	.000	.019	.	.500
		df	64	64	64	0	64
	Issues Relating to Role	Correlation	-.224	-.213	.360**	.085	1.000
		Significance (2-tailed)	.071	.086	.003	.500	.
		df	64	64	64	64	0

\*\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed).

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).



## **8.9 *Conclusions and Implications for Research and Practice***

### **8.9.1 Academic Research**

#### **8.9.1.1 Validity of the Amended Instrument**

One of the central purposes of this research was to test the validity of the Kakabadse Survey Instrument (1999) in the local government context. Usefully, the majority of scales received a Cronbach Alpha score of greater than 0.6, and are therefore considered valid.

The validated scales, in order of reliability, are Authority Culture; Communication – personal; Strategic Leadership; Job Satisfaction; Pulling Together; Attention to Customer Care; Cohesive Top Team; Independence; Communication – authority; Diversity of Idea; Leadership Performance; Political Group Understanding and influence (Member and Officer); Discipline; Customer Focus; and Autonomy.

The following scales did not meet the required level of validity, and are therefore not accepted, namely Role Issues (Members Only); Cabinet Team Decision Making Ability; Role Issues (Member and Officer); and Political Group Understanding and Influence (Members only).

In retrospect, it should have been understood that Political Group Understanding and Influence (Members only) was unlikely to reach reliability given that it is composed of only two elements.

The remaining three discarded scales of Role Issues (Members Only); Cabinet Team Decision Making Ability; and Role Issues (Member and Officer), however, warrant further research, given that each have elements which have a significant impact on leadership performance, and the high associated R Squared scores for the scales.

### **8.9.1.2 Political Group Understanding and Influence**

This was an entirely new scale developed and evolved from the qualitative research that formed an earlier stage of this research, based upon respondents understanding of Top Team Leadership in the local government context. The scale achieved a Cronbach Alpha score of 0.73, and is therefore considered valid and reliable across the broader context.

The notion of the political group has received scant attention in academic research, perhaps given the fact that political groups form no formal part of council structure either under constitution or law.

However, given the high level of significance ( $p < 0.01$ ) of this scale, and the high R Squared score (0.201), further exploration of this scale would seem necessary.

### **8.9.1.3 Membership of the Cabinet Team**

Once again, this demographic element emerged from the earlier qualitative research. Interestingly, although the question of whether an individual felt part of the Cabinet Team was raised in interview, it was only included on the survey instrument at the suggestion of the Expert Officer Group involved in the face validation of the adapted questionnaire. Such a question was not utilised in other studies that have utilised the Kakabadse instrument, and it is suggested that given the high significance level in the local authority context, this question be explored with Top Teams in other contexts.

### **8.9.1.4 The Survey Sample**

Given a sample size of 776 possible respondents of both Leaders and Chief Executives, an overall response rate of greater than 20% is welcomed. However, given resources (time and money), it would be useful to test the perceptions of the Leader and Chief Executive (as explored in this study) with other members of the Top Team (a potential 15000 respondents).

However, the issue of validity of inclusion would need to be addressed, given that there is no central list defining the composition of teams at individual authorities – for example, some authorities include Heads of Service, others only directors. Also, the information tends to be captured centrally and in reference literature immediately post election, and not updated for changes during the year.

#### **8.9.1.5 Other Research**

The inclusion of the demographic elements at the first section of the survey instrument allow a range of different correlations to be undertaken. For example, the cluster widely utilised in this research focused on the clusters of Leader and Chief executive – a similar analysis exploring difference of response based on gender or age would also be of interest, and the data captured would allow this.

#### **8.9.1.6 What is Top Team Leadership in local government really about?**

The literature review and qualitative interviews provided an opportunity to explore in theoretical terms a model of leadership for the local government context.

The survey and subsequent initial correlation analysis demonstrated that there existed a number of significant correlations between the elements explored and described within the schools of thought from literature, and that model derived from interview. However, given the number of significant relationships, the analysis at that point provided little of value other than the validation that the constructs held relevancy in a local government setting.

The subsequent regression analysis demonstrated that, in fact, a number of the constructs held greater significance when considered in terms of leadership performance, with by far the highest level of significance being attributed to the scale relating to Strategic Leadership Ability. This scale describes the ability to develop, communicate and gain commitment to a shared vision, linked to team context.

It also demonstrated that role; job satisfaction; quality of cabinet decision making; membership of the cabinet team; and understanding of political processes, also had a significant impact upon leadership performance.

Once again, whilst they provide a more focused and limited set of those elements warranting attention in this context, it does little more than once again validate the literature and the earlier model. Indeed, with the exception of the political element, which was derived specifically from the qualitative research element, the above set of constructs replicate those produced by the Kakabadse and Kakabadse research (1999), the only addition to praxis gained from the regression analysis being this notion of difference of degree of significance.

However, it is with the further partial correlation analysis that we see the real addition to academic research. The inclusion of this methodology has allowed us to explore specific relationships, whilst separating out the effects of other elements.

For instance, this has allowed us to explore those specific items showing the highest levels of significance in terms of leadership performance.

Although the initial purpose postulated by this research was described as gaining insight and understanding into top team leadership in local government, the research allows us to explore and challenge a further question.

Namely, whilst we can see that there are a number of elements that have significance in terms of leadership performance, if there was just one critical activity to undertake, what would it be? Is it about defining role, position, function, job satisfaction, background, capability or dynamics of the team?

As often noted in this paper, literature has described them all separately as important. The partial correlation analysis is clear – whilst indeed all of these elements are validated as having significance, in practice it is the team itself that is important, the dynamics of the group, and a focus on being, acting and performing as a team.

There is greater correlation and significance between team cohesion, pulling together, and working through diversity, than issues relating to role or cabinet membership. Indeed, whilst job satisfaction does demonstrate a degree of significance in terms of correlation and regression, once again it is statistically second to matters around team cohesion.

## **8.9.2 Conclusions and Implications for Practitioners**

This section will explore implications emanating from this research in terms of leadership and leadership development in the local government context.

### **8.9.2.1 Its all about Leadership**

Much of the theory, guidance, development, audit process and even legislation, in local government places leadership at the heart of successful governance. This research demonstrates that this is absolutely true, with the four strategic Leadership scales (Strategic Leadership; Cohesive Top Team; Pulling Together; and Diversity of Idea) providing 47.7% predictor for Leadership Performance.

Moreover, the Strategic Leadership scale holds a  $p < 0.001$  significance level impact on Leadership Performance. Likewise, Diversity of Ideas has a  $p < 0.05$  significance level of impact.

Much of this construct, therefore, speaks to the need to develop a coherent vision over the long term, and build consensus across the Cabinet Team, combined with an ability to raise, explore and resolve sensitive issues across the membership of the team. (We must remember here the link to issues relating to the Political Group, which will be discussed shortly.)

It is therefore of interest that authority constitutions, emanating from guidance and legislation, tend to relate only to the detail of process, responsibility and structure – as do the majority of development programmes. Little space is given to relational aspects between members and officers, and often, where reference is made, that it relates to negative aspects of poor behaviour, rather than promoting positive relations.

Similarly, there is little space given at the front end of new administrations to the development, or even supporting the development, of a coherent vision.

The “first hundred days” is often described in local government improvement circles as the critical time for new administrations in maintaining organisational energy. It is estimated as the time that administrations have to “get their ship in order”, i.e. build relationships with officers, undertake strategic thinking, build consensus necessary etc., whilst the public and press give space before challenging the new administration.

Incidentally, development for members during this period often takes the form of a download of technical issues, such as budgeting, legal framework, planning regulations, and expenses. Scant attention is paid to visioning or relations with officers.

The reverse also holds true for officers. During the critical hundred days, officers spend time undertaking detail presentations, rather than building understanding and relation with members, and exploring vision.

This research would suggest a twin track approach, encompassing both technical detail and relational understanding.

### **8.9.2.2 The Cabinet Team and Decision Making**

I initially put forward the notion of the Cabinet team as a descriptor for the position of joint legitimacy of leadership of members and officers, specifically relating to that point in the process when senior members and officers come together to agree strategic direction, and employ Strategic Leadership, as above.

Indeed, it was feedback relating to the face validation element of the amended Kakabadse instrument that one of the participating experts suggested that the notion membership of the Cabinet Team be explicitly explored as a Demographic factor.

As demonstrated, this one element has a  $p < 0.005$  significance level of impact on Leadership Performance. Critically, whilst 97% of Leaders perceive that they have membership of the Cabinet Team, only 58% of Chief Executives describe similar perceptions.

Partly, I would suggest, this relates to the traditional stance of local government that members lead and officers implement, creating often a two tier system of membership.

This would suggest, for a construct with significant impact, such barriers need to be broken down, or at least further explored. It does not suggest that roles are forgotten, rather that roles and boundaries are clearly understood – but that such understanding includes the notions of shared legitimacy of leadership, and provides officers with a setting and relationship that can engender such a feeling of membership.

Similarly, local authority structures tend to provide for a Senior Management Team for the Officers, and a Cabinet or Management Board of some description for Members. The Cabinet protocols tend to include descriptions of members decision making processes and responsibilities, but not the joint element of role, or any relational context. Developmental programmes similarly neglect such matters. This research would suggest inclusion of such notions.

Elements of Cabinet Decision Making Ability have demonstrated a statistically significant impact. Firstly, the perception of high quality decision making in the Cabinet Team shows a  $p < 0.001$  level of significance, suggesting that the detail and process elements require clarity, information, exploration, consultation and evaluation.

The second such significant element is the construct relating to decisions being made behind closed doors ( $p < 0.05$ , negative impact). This relates to the perception that cabinets meet to make decisions in absence of other members (opposition) or the public, though this should not be the case by legislation.

Whilst Cabinets have the ability to discuss matters in private, local government legislation means that decisions of greater than operational impact have to be made in public session. However, the significance of this item suggests that the perception has to be dealt with as well as the reality.



### **8.9.2.3 Role and Job Satisfaction**

Hambrick and Mason (1984) suggest that role is a critical element of leadership. Kakabadse and Kakabadse (1999) utilised the construct of role in the development of their Theory of Top Teams, which was then included, and subsequently validated, as a scale within their questionnaire.

It is interesting that such scales were not validated in the local government context, though as stated in Section 7.1, this is an element warranting further research.

That being said, the elements relating to Role were demonstrated to have an R Squared score of 0.248, thus explaining 24.8% of leadership performance, which would suggest that a focus at a pragmatic level is of importance. In part, I would suggest from experience that whilst there is clarity of role separation to an extent (policy versus strategy versus operational), the limits between them are often “grey”, unexplored and unclear. Indeed, a session with the Cabinet Team testing expectations of role of between both members and officers often yields positive and unexpected results.

Further, a number of independent variables did demonstrate significance. Firstly, both members and officers described the usage of time for simply bureaucratic purposes, which produced little in perceived value to the organisation. Indeed, this construct achieved a  $p < 0.05$  (negative) significance level.

This would suggest that any authority seeks to construct processes that, whilst maintain transparency (noting the significance of the “closed door” construct as discussed above), remove extraneous bureaucratic elements wherever possible. This is especially true, given that time is a scarce resource for members and officers, 54% noting work-life balance issues.

Linked to this discussion is the (negative) significance of salary for members, perceived as a barrier to greater role performance by 41.8% of leaders. I would suggest that this is especially true for those in District Councils, where salary levels are prohibitive except for those with other sources of income. Salary Schemes for

Councillors, whilst apparently problematic on occasion for members to make decisions on themselves for fear of telling the electorate they have given themselves pay rises, need to be addressed if we are to encourage both quality members, and a diverse range of members, to enter the fray.

The other aspect of role demonstrating a significant level of impact on leadership performance is that of electoral timescales creating short-term decision-making. The tension comes from role descriptors and the notion that the operational role is the purview of the officer. The public, however, require administrations to deliver operational imperatives – “it’s the small things that count...”.

So, when election time comes closer, members look more closely to operational delivery, and seek to make decisions based on such considerations. However, both officers and members are (rightly) tasked with tackling long-term issues which necessitate generational solutions, and long term visions. Hence the resulting tension.

Whilst legislation, guidance and constitutions all denote such operational divides, members in practice have high levels of role discretion (Jaques, 1951), which does not help resolution of the aforementioned tension.

Hence, understanding of issues that are important to members need to be understood, explored, challenged if necessary, and acted upon if possible, as part of the strategic process. This needs to be raised early on in administrations, relies upon members to have clarity on what such issues might be, a context where such issues can be raised if sensitive, and a Top Team where visioning can incorporate such short term objectives within a longer term context can gain support.

All this in turn affects Job Satisfaction, also demonstrated to hold a significant impact on leadership performance.

#### **8.9.2.4 The Political Group**

The Political Group has no mention in legislation, guidance, or often even local authority constitution. By inference, there is no detail given as to the relationship in structural, process or relational terms to any point of the local authority itself. However, it is in-fact a point of importance in practical terms as it often represents the point of decision making within the authority in real terms, and also the group of individuals who vote the leader into that position.

This research similarly indicates that, both for member and officer, understanding and influence of the Political group and its processes exerts a highly significant impact ( $P < 0.01$ ) on leadership performance, with a high R Squared score at 0.201, hence explaining 20.1% of leadership performance.

It is interesting that whilst there is little or no discussion or development for officers in this field, for members, there is often a similar lack of development of understanding – members are often thrown in at the “deep-end”, and rarely think about how best to connect group and authority processes, or share knowledge (only 48.7% feel that group members understand the big picture).

This “big picture” has further significance. How can a group make informed policy or strategy decisions without understanding at the strategic level? Further, it appears that there is often little relation between a groups manifesto and this strategic picture and vision, often little clear vision at all (68.6% feel groups have a clear vision).

This would imply the need for groups to have access to support to explore the strategic landscape, and produce informed and appropriate manifestos and policy agendas to take forward into the council process at appropriate points.

For officers, it suggests a need to get closer to the political groups; to understand the roles of the politicians within said groups, and how to influence them; to understand those points of importance within agendas that are non-negotiable by members; to be able to put forward information into the political milieu.

More importantly, it re-emphasises the need to create space for effective dialogue in a safe space between members and officers within the council process, and to ensure alignment and consensus of agenda and vision.

#### **8.9.2.5 Communication**

Once the vision and priorities have achieved consensus, the other area of significance identified within this research is that of authority level communication, implying the need to share and test that vision throughout the organisation, to achieve greater commitment and hence the delivery sought by members.

Interestingly, the research suggests this as a role for both members and officers, which in part relates to that shared legitimacy of leadership described at the outset.

#### **8.9.2.6 Development Programmes**

At present, much of the development activity within the local government context focuses on skill development of the individual, or the detail of role, structure or process.

This research would suggest the need for an approach that also engages with aspects of perception, expectation and relation between officer and member. Specifically, an approach that facilitates “real” discussion (i.e. one which includes sensitive issues) around vision and priority (both short and long term, including non-negotiable elements) and role, fostering the notion of a joint Cabinet Team, where inclusion and job satisfaction are seen as valued commodities.

There are specific role issues that also warrant exploration within the specific context of each authority – salaries for members being seen as important rather than extravagance; and processes that wherever possible reduce time spent on purely bureaucratic activities.

Of greater importance is the developmental importance of understanding and influencing political group processes. Given its demonstrated importance, and the lack of guidance relating to this construct, developmental work at the authority level for both members and officers is required in both principle terms, but also for dialogue to share strategic information and thinking, build constituency of idea and generate direction and momentum of change.

### **8.9.2.7 Team Cohesion and Dynamics**

The real benefit from this research for the practitioner is, however, derived from the partial correlation analyses. In essence, they answer some of the key questions relating to development activities in local authorities today. The inference from the research is that work in authorities around being a team (for officers and members) is of critical importance.

Whilst support for authorities at the moment often surrounds mentoring activity and peer support or challenge, it is the active process of being and supporting the team that is really important. In part, this offers validation of the strategic team development centre process, which actively encourages team dialogue, participation, sharing support and understanding, especially as these mirror the constructs of this research described as pulling together and diversity of idea.



# Cranfield University

School of Management

D.B.A.

## **Appendices**

2007

Jonathan V. Huish

Understanding Leadership in Local Government

Supervisor: Professor Andrew Kakabadse  
Professor Nada Korac-Kakabadse  
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## 9 APPENDICES

### 9.1 Appendix I : Reference List

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## **9.2 Appendix 2 - Interview Guide/Protocol**

### *Section 1 : Background*

Could you provide some details in relation to the following?

- Educational background – academic, professional and vocational training
- Professional background – role, functional area, responsibilities, length of tenure, etc.

### *Section 2 : Role*

- Current Role – role, functional area, responsibilities, length of tenure, etc.
- Current Role – Strategic / Operational / Bureaucratic

### *Section 3 : Challenges*

Could you describe the following?

- What are the main challenges that are facing the organisation at the moment?
- What are the main challenges that are or will occupy your time?

### *Section 4 : Context*

Could you describe the following?

- Do you feel there is a top team in RCT, what constitutes the top team, and what challenges face it's members ?
- Is there an agreed vision within the Top Team?
- Do members of the Top Team feel open to express sensitive issues?
- Are there any other context issues?

### *Section 5: Capabilities*

What capabilities or skills are considered necessary in overcoming the challenges described above?

### **9.3 Appendix 3 - Transcript example of one interview**

Cllr Jarman, Leader of Rhondda Cynon Taff, can I start by saying many thanks for accepting this invitation to an interview. We've been through briefly what it's all about and what we're going to cover, are you happy to start?

Yes, certainly.

#### **Can I begin by asking how are you feeling today?**

Given that it's late on a Monday afternoon, I'm a little wired as we're due to start cabinet in a little over an hour – and it could be a contentious agenda! That aside, I'm quite rested after the weekend, and the day's been productive so far.

#### **What have you been doing today?**

I had a useful session today with you (Deputy Leader) and the Corporate Management Team in preparation for today's meeting, where we also managed to clear a number of outstanding issues off the agenda.

#### **If you're happy, we'll move onto the formal questions for the study – firstly, can you describe your background?**

Although I haven't had a university education, I think all those who know me would admit I've definitely got a post grad from the university of life ! In school terms, I was a Grammar School Girl from Mountain Ash, and did well there, before going on to work in our family business, a butchers shop.

I did that till I got elected, some 29 years ago now, back in the days when there were not many women Councillors, and when Plaid Cymru was really misunderstood, but definitely in the minority. In fact, I've been a minority party councillor for 26 years before finally leading this council from 1999. Also, I have served as a Regional Assembly Member from 1999 to the present date, though I will be retiring from that position in May 2003 to concentrate on local government.



**If we could move on to talk about your current role, could you describe that role in functional terms, in time terms and anything else you feel important?**

Well, I think the formal title of my position is Leader of the Council, though I imagine most people don't really know what that means – and it means different things to different leaders!

First and foremost, it means that I have overall responsibility to the public for the political direction of this council – the policies, the expenditure, even down to the way it works.

That means, in practical terms, a revenue budget of £350m a year, a capital budget of £50m a year, and other grant supported expenditure of some £100m a year – though in practice, I delegate that power to you as Deputy Leader – as you know, I describe the split in our workloads as you get the organisational, I get the political, you get the business and strategy, I get the social side.

An integral part of that role is, by definition, that I Chair the Cabinet at RCT, with responsibility for the work programme and policy reports that come forward as a result.

Another key part of my role is to be the ultimate arbiter of public complaints or issues with RCT – essentially, if a resident has a problem, there's a good chance that they'll write to me to sort it out if they aren't getting satisfaction from the officers – which is often the case, unfortunately, though they're not always right either.

Also, I guess I'm the link between the political side of the council, the members, and the officers who are there to develop and implement our policies – and with 14,000 staff, that's a big job – though my role isn't to know them all! And trying to keep both sides happy and working together is quite a job, I can tell you!

On another front, I also have to meet outside groups and businesses, and sit on a number of outside bodies and partnerships – an increasing part of my role, - not forgetting my role as a local member, and representing the needs of my own community.

If I think of anything else, I'll tell you when I remember it – is that ok for now?

**In terms of time utilisation, could you talk about how much time is taken up by transactional things and how much transformational. Another split that has been made by other people who have been interviewed so far is to include bureaucratic things in there as well. I don't know if you'd care to use that term or not.**

The role of leader is really complex, and changes on a day to day basis – I get a lot of homework, and I guess I'd call that operational stuff – similarly, dealing with all the day to day issues for residents, or issues for the council that aren't of a day to day basis – though I know the role isn't supposed to be operational.

It's bureaucratic to the extent that there's stuff we all have to do as part of local authority life – executive decisions and the like.

The best part is the policy level though – that's where we have the real debate, and it's often hardest for me to get agreement – balancing the agendas of officers, members and the public, and the operational needs against those of policies, all against an environment of outside influence and regulation.

**What challenges would you say face you personally in your role?**

The main challenge for me is to keep all the different parts of the council in accord – the public, other stakeholders, the programmes, officers, members – it can be a bit of nightmare. We run the council with a majority of one, and that doesn't leave a lot of room for manoeuvre – especially with some of the premadonna's that we have around the place. There are so many key players that have to be involved, heard and happy, that the process is often longer than I'd hope, though the answers often are better as a result.

The other is getting some sort of balance, firstly in terms of my organisational and ward roles – my electorate still needs to know who I am – but also in terms of work-life balance – we’re here working late far too often.

**In terms of capabilities that you feel you possess, which capabilities do you feel most useful in achieving the things you’ve been talking about?**

Firstly, there’s my experience. There aren’t many political situations I haven’t seen before, and not much that’s new.

Secondly, I’d like to think that people value my judgement – I’ve got a good empathy with the needs of the public, I know instinctively where people are coming from, and I’m good at reading situations.

I’m known for my straightness and being value driven – it’s almost become the brand of the council – and for listening to what people say – people aren’t afraid to confide in me, and trust me to act in their best interest.

I hope that’s true of the officers as well – I always try and make sure that the policy we agree at least has taken account of their views – and if we vary, it’s with good reason.

**If we could move on to the organisation as a whole, firstly what challenges are facing the organisation at this moment in time as you see them?**

Firstly, we’ve spent the last 3 years or so sorting out the inherited problems – deficit budgets, no capacity in staff terms, and no strategies – and we’re through that now. We’re really at a stage where the Council can deliver for the people, but the question is whether we can do that in our political timescale with an election coming up, that is deliver to such an extent that people can see the difference, but doing so without harming the organisation – it’s been through a lot already. But politically, us not delivering and retaining control at the next elections just isn’t an option, so there’s a definite tension there.

That means that we have a number of other challenges – keeping all the players on side - members with a majority of 1, officers being pushed to the limits, the list goes on.

I bet others will talk about budgets, staff structures and the like – but I don't think those are real challenges for us – it's the cultural issue about how we deal with them and the will to hold our course when there are sensitive problems, that counts now – and that's about holding our team together.

**In terms of Rhondda Cynon Taff as an organisation, do you feel that there exists a top team? If so, what do you understand by that?**

That's a good question, and the answer has to be yes – but a better question would be – how strong is the top team, and what is its composition.

Under the new arrangements in the council, we have two senior teams of people – the cabinet, or 10 elected members, and the corporate management team, made up of officers. The real top team is, or should be, the cabinet with the officers, a hybrid top team that, when firing on all cylinders, should be a real powerhouse.

The problem is that in practical terms, there's not always full acceptance and consensus about the issues were working on, whether by members, officers or both.

Often, it's just a group of us – me, you, John Codd, plus some of the officers – Kim (the chief exec), Keith Griffiths, plus maybe one or two of the group directors.

Outside of that group, who I think really do work across the Council themes, there are some who join in when they feel it's their specific responsibility, or if they have a personal interest. Other times, people think almost defensively, rather than for the greater good.

**Do you think in part that might be because a number of the Cabinet Members take a part time role as a Cabinet Member or lack of desire to engage?**

I think it's a mixture of both- there is no way, for example, that I could do my job properly by remote control, and that's true I'm sure for all really engaged Councillors at cabinet level.

But, beggars can't be choosers – we are looking to get more professional and able people into taking up such a public role, but the salary level just doesn't reflect the value of the job, so you can understand why people need to do other work besides. Though it does mean we have to look at effectiveness on a person by person basis – we may get people who are less able simply because they can put in the hours.

**In terms of challenges facing the top team, what do you see the main challenges as being?**

Firstly, it's staying together as a team – as I said earlier, it's going to be a challenging time ahead, and there's got to be determination from all people to hold our course – it's not going to be easy delivering in our timescales- there's a tension as the officers necessarily look to the long term, and while we'd like to as politicians, there's this 4 yr thing that gets in the way!

Then there's the issue of balancing peoples abilities and talents to the jobs at hand, not always an easy job – I call it the democratic deficit – capabilities versus political pragmatism.

And it goes further than the cabinet – the group has 38 members who I have to support and keep on board through all of this, and that leads to communication problems and problems of members feeling like they're not involved, so we have to create processes that help us muddle through all of that as well.

**In terms of the top team, what capabilities do you think are held within the members of the top team that are going to be advantages on this agenda?**

Firstly, it's a willingness to work towards a consensus viewpoint – essential in terms of team working – and a trust in each others abilities and viewpoints.

We've got a good range of abilities, on both sides of the team (officer and member) – often mirrored across both – from strategic thinkers, people who understand organisations, the politics underlying issues, experience – as well as technical skills, tempered with a will to get the job done.

**One of the things that you were talking about was the need for strategic capability. Do you think there is within the top team cohesion of strategy and understanding of the shared agenda?**

To a large extent, yes there is – if we are talking about the bigger picture, though I think once again it differs if you are talking about more day to day issues, and less strategic stuff.

We've actively created processes to get people involved in developing and understanding that big picture – though I'm not sure everybody can operate at that level.

**In terms of the context of which the top team operates, talking about things like ability to raise issues that may be sensitive. Could you describe the context maybe that the team operates in if you feel it's appropriate, or maybe one that you'd like it to operate in?**

I think that I'd describe it as a team context, where people are happy to speak their mind, and understand the reasons behind why we do the things we do. It's communicative and not too reliant on power relations – though relationships often temper the quality of debate, for example one of our cabinet members doesn't get on with their group director, and that does cause difficulties with that portfolio.

**Thank you very much for that at this point in time. Could I ask 2 things; Firstly if you have any more thoughts yourself along the lines we've been talking about, could you jot them down and pass them along to me and secondly; If, having done the other interviews that I've still got left to do, if there's any issues that may arise from those that we haven't covered, could I come back and ask you to comment on those?**

Certainly!

**Thank you very much for your time.**

#### 9.4 Appendix 4: Validated Existing Scales

	<b>Leadership Performance (Alpha=0.88)</b>
1.	The needs of the customer are well understood by those in senior management positions (scale reversed)
2.	Senior management are performing effectively (scale reversed)
3.	Those at the top are too distant from what happens on a daily basis
4.	The senior managers of this organisation are good listeners (scale reversed)
5.	I am committed to the leadership of this organisation (scale reversed)
6.	The Top Management Team have little impact on the running of the organisation
7.	The Chief Executive seems distant to me
8.	The Board have no effective impact on the management of this organisation
9.	The Executive Directors seem distant to me
10.	The senior managers of this organisation could be more tolerant of one another

	<b>Strategic Leadership (Alpha=0.88)</b> <b>The senior/top managers ...</b>
1.	Can usually identify what needs to change in the organisation in order for it to operate more effectively
2.	Are able to grasp a new subject/issue quickly and use it to best effect
3.	Are willing to change the way we do things if it is to the benefit of the business/others
4.	Have a clear strategic direction
5.	Have an overall knowledge of the business
6.	Know how each part of the business works
7.	Have goals that clear cut and reasonable

	<b>Cohesive Top Team (Alpha=0.84)</b> <b>Within the organisation the member of the Top Team ...</b>
1.	Are easy to talk to
2.	Openly discuss sensitive issues
3.	Have a good understanding of each other
4.	Trust each other
5.	Will consistently implement decisions made
6.	Will address long and short-term issues

	<b>Pulling Together (Alpha=0.77)</b>
1.	My colleagues and I get on well as a team
2.	I get on well with people from different functions / specialisms
3.	There exists a good team spirit within the organisation
4.	Senior management are pulling in the same direction



	<b>Diverse Top Team (Alpha=0.75)</b>
1.	There is a lack of direction concerning the future
2.	The various members of the Top Management Team hold different views as to the future direction of the organisation
3.	The Top Team seem to pull in different directions, irrespective of what is agreed
4.	The long-term objectives of the organisation are clear (scale reversed)
5.	There are certain issues or sensitivities that merit, but do not receive attention within the Top Team

	<b>Direction/Autonomy (Alpha=0.74)</b>
1.	We have the freedom to perform in our role
2.	Staff have the freedom to influence many changes
3.	There is scope for individual initiative with few constraints
4.	Everyone is aware of the 'big picture'

	<b>Communication – Organisational Input (Alpha=0.77)</b>
1.	The quality of communication is good at senior management levels
2.	Communication across departments is good
3.	The senior managers of this organisation are good listeners
4.	I am regularly informed about how new developments and initiatives are progressing
5.	Communication within departments is good
6.	I am only informed of new developments on a 'need to know' basis (scale reversed)

	<b>Communication – Personal Input (Alpha=0.79)</b>
1.	I communicate well with my peers
2.	I am easy to talk to
3.	I communicate effectively with those around me
4.	It is important to have an open management style where others can speak freely

	<b>Business Focus (Alpha=0.78)</b>
1.	We provide a service/product to fit the purpose
2.	Our relationship with clients is on a partnership basis
3.	We exceed client expectations
4.	Everyone in this organisation knows how they themselves add value
5.	We are responsive to changing business priorities

	<b>Attention to Customer/Client Care (Alpha=0.76)</b>
1.	More time is spent on management related issues at the expense of customer care
2.	The way this organisation operates diverts attention away from customer care
3.	In this organisation not enough thought is given to customer care
4.	Current budgeting practices adversely affect customer care
5.	The internal politics within the organisation have an adverse affect on the quality of service provided

	<b>Independence (Alpha=0.73)</b>
1.	Being my own boss is what really appeals to me
2.	I like to be left alone to do my work as I see fit
3.	I like being in a position where others do not have control over me
4.	I resent being told what to do

	<b>Discipline (Alpha=0.81)</b>
1.	We need a structured and disciplined way of managing the business
2.	I am disciplined at follow-through
3.	A well run, disciplined organisation is fundamental to success
4.	It is important to follow established work procedures
5.	I like people to pay attention to details
6.	I like people to be tidy and well disciplined
7.	I respect people who stick to the rules

	<b>Job Satisfaction (Alpha=0.86)</b>
1.	Most people at my level are satisfied with the job
2.	Generally, I am very satisfied with my job
3.	Morale within the organisation is high
4.	I am motivated to carry out my job
5.	I enjoy the challenge of my role in the company
6.	The job is intellectually challenging

	<b>Positive Culture (Alpha=0.88)</b>
1.	I feel a part of this organisation
2.	I identify with the organisation and what it stands for
3.	I am committed to this organisation
4.	I am committed to my colleagues in this organisation
5.	The quality of staff in this organisation is excellent
6.	The sort of people we have in the organisation are dedicated to its success
7.	Staff development here is take seriously
8.	There is a friendly atmosphere within the organisation
9.	It is people who make the organisation 'tick'

	<b>Personality and Career Success (Alpha=0.85)</b>
1.	Those who 'shout loudest' seem more likely to get promoted
2.	Promotion is related more to personality than intellectual ability
3.	It is not what you know but who you know that allows you to progress
4.	Promotion comes about through careful networking with the right people
5.	More often than not, it is the wrong person who is being promoted
6.	In order to progress your 'face to needs to fit'
7.	If you want promotion, you have to push for it yourself
8.	If you make a mistake then it will work against you

	<b>Managing Processes Expertise (Alpha=0.87)</b>
1.	Proven processes are in place for selecting service providers
2.	We have the management and specialist capacity to negotiate and draw up a variety of outsourcing arrangements
3.	We have a database for benchmarking our service level agreements
4.	We have effective processes for resources/assets transfer
5.	We have in place effective systems/benchmarks for monitoring outsourcing performance
6.	We have proven experience with a variety of outsourcing arrangements
7.	We have the capabilities for managing human resources in the outsourcing process
8.	We have in-house management and technical expertise to manage the outsourcing process/function
9.	Risk management is one of our core competencies

	<b>Integrated Ways of Working (Alpha=0.85)</b>
1.	We have the competencies to integrate activities we have outsourced and continue to utilise within our current processes and systems
2.	We have the competencies to effectively re-arrange our ways of working as a result of our outsourcing particular activities
3.	We have the understanding of how to facilitate relationships at different organisational levels as a result of evolving needs in the outsourced arrangement(s)
4.	We have competencies in building effective and lasting partnerships
5.	We regularly apply quality controls

	<b>Strategic Importance of IT (Alpha=0.81)</b>
1.	It is important to be fully aware of emerging technology
2.	It is important to strategically position the IT department to suit the increasing demands on the business
3.	Business and IT are going to have to work closer with each other by prioritising initiatives
4.	We will have to introduce new systems to cope with the rapid growth of the organisation
5.	We will have to keep up with the rate of change in technology

	<b>Outsourcing Preparedness (Alpha=0.83)</b>
1.	Our outsourcing strategy strongly supports the organisation's key strategic proposition(s)
2.	Our staff are briefed and prepared for the organisation's next outsourcing initiative
3.	The organisation has allocated resources for further growing and developing outsourcing capabilities
4.	Our outsourcing strategy is in line with the organisation's strategy
5.	Our outsourcing strategy has take into account how to manage outsourced relationships

	<b>Outsourcing Capability (Alpha=0.80)</b>
1.	We have the capability to resource all phases of outsourcing
2.	We have the resource capacity to support the outsourcing strategy
3.	We train and develop our staff and managers to effectively leverage various outsourcing arrangements
4.	We have a strategy in place for addressing staff issues/changes as a result of outsourcing

## **9.5 Appendix 5 - Final Questionnaire**

# **Leadership Inventory**

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### **Instructions**

This questionnaire is divided into separate sections and should take approximately 20 minutes to complete. In answering the questions/statements please tick or circle appropriate responses where required.

Your responses will be treated in the strictest confidence and data will only be presented in an aggregated form. When you have completed the questionnaire, please return it in the reply paid envelope provided.

### **Notes**

Within the local government context, the divide between officer and member is clear, namely that the Cabinet (for ease of reference, please include here also Management Board or equivalent) itself is composed of Councillors. However, the spirit of the Act is more often interpreted as being such that Members and Officers work together at Cabinet in dual leadership of an authority. This is reflected in the questionnaire throughout the questionnaire by the use of the term “Cabinet Team”.

The questionnaire is being circulated to both senior members and officers, and as such certain questions will be more applicable to one rather than another group. Please answer as best you can. As hinted at above, it is being circulated to authorities with arrangements other than the Cabinet model – please signify if this is your case. It is also being circulated to Councils with both an outright majority, and those with other arrangements. Once again, certain questions may feel more relevant to you than others. Please answer according to your view of your Council’s circumstances.

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**Thank you for your co-operation.**

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## Background Information

Gender		Age		Seniority	
Male	1	under 30	1	Leader	1
Female	2	30 to 39	2	Deputy Leader	2
		40 to 49	3	Cabinet Member	3
		50 to 59	4	Chief Executive	4
		60 or over	5	Director	5
Years in this authority		Years in current job		Are you a member of the Cabinet (or other) Team	
Less than 1	1	Less than 1	1		
1 to 2	2	1 to 2	2	Yes	1
3 to 5	3	3 to 5	3	No	2
6 to 10	4	6 to 10	4		
11 to 20	5	11 to 20	5		
21 and over	6	21 and over	6		
Authority Classification Team		Political Context of Cabinet (or other)			
Borough	1	Single Party Control	1		
County	2	Hung Council	2		
Unitary / County Borough	3	Multi-Party Cabinet	3		
City	4	Other	4		
Number of employees		Main Services			
Under 500	1	Corporate / Finance / HR	1	Children	
6					
500 to 2,499	2	Regeneration & Housing	2	Legal / Quasi-	
Judicial	7				
2,500 to 4,999	3	Education & Cultural	3	DSO / DLO	
8					
5k – 9,999	4	Social Care & Health	4	Policy	
9					
10k – 14,999	5	Environmental	5	Other	
10					
15,000 or over	6				

<b>Leadership Performance - Positive</b>		Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree	
1.	The Cabinet Team are performing effectively	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I am committed to the leadership of this authority	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Successful policy implementation depends upon my ability to handle members of the Cabinet Team	1	2	3	4	5
4.	The needs of the customer are well understood by those in the Cabinet Team	1	2	3	4	5

<b>Leadership Performance - Negative (scale reversed)</b>		Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree	
1.	Those at the top are too distant from what happens on a daily basis	1	2	3	4	5
2.	The Cabinet Team have little impact on the running of the authority	1	2	3	4	5
3.	The Chief Executive seems distant to me	1	2	3	4	5
4.	The Cabinet Members have no effective impact on the management of this authority	1	2	3	4	5
5.	The Cabinet Officers seem distant to me	1	2	3	4	5
6.	The Cabinet Team in this authority could be more tolerant of one another	1	2	3	4	5

<b>Strategic Leadership - The Cabinet Team ...</b>		Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree	
1.	Can usually identify what needs to change in the authority in order for it to operate more effectively	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Are able to grasp a new subject or issue quickly	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Grasp an issue, and use it quickly to best effect	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Are willing to change the way we do things if it is to the benefit of the authority	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Have a clear strategic direction	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Have an overall knowledge of the authority	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Know how each part of the authority works	1	2	3	4	5
8.	Have goals that are clear cut and reasonable	1	2	3	4	5
9.	Can see the light at the end of the tunnel in respect of current changes	1	2	3	4	5

<b>Cohesive Top Team - The members of the Cabinet Team ...</b>		Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree	
1.	Are easy to talk to	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Openly discuss sensitive issues	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Have a good understanding of each other	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Trust each other	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Will consistently implement decisions made	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Will address long and short-term issues	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Members and Officers spend time together productively for the authority	1	2	3	4	5
8.	Identify more with personal objectives than those of the authority	1	2	3	4	5
9.	Have experienced that maintaining Cabinet Team cohesion demands constant encouragement of my colleagues to work as a team	1	2	3	4	5



<b>Pulling Together</b>		Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree	
1.	My colleagues and I get on well as a team	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I get on well with people from different functions / specialisms	1	2	3	4	5
3.	There exists a good team spirit within the authority	1	2	3	4	5
4.	The Cabinet Team are pulling in the same direction	1	2	3	4	5

<b>Diverse Top Team</b>		Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree	
1.	The long-term objectives of the authority are clear within the Cabinet Team	1	2	3	4	5
2.	The various members of the Cabinet Team hold different views as to the future direction of the authority	1	2	3	4	5
3.	The Cabinet Team seem to pull in different directions, irrespective of what is agreed	1	2	3	4	5
4.	There are certain issues or sensitivities that merit, but do not receive attention within the Cabinet Team	1	2	3	4	5

<b>Autonomy</b>		Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree	
1.	We have the freedom to perform in our role	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Staff have the freedom to influence many changes	1	2	3	4	5
3.	There is scope for individual initiative with few constraints	1	2	3	4	5

<b>Communication - Authority Input</b>		Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree	
1.	The quality of communication is good at Cabinet Team level	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Communication across departments is good	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Members of the Cabinet Team are good listeners	1	2	3	4	5
4.	I am regularly informed about how new developments and initiatives are progressing	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Communication within departments is good	1	2	3	4	5
6.	I am only informed of new developments on a 'need to know' basis (scale reversed)	1	2	3	4	5
7.	People should manage their own problems without having to talk them through with others	1	2	3	4	5
8.	I have all the information I need to participate in policy and decision making	1	2	3	4	5

<b>Communication – Personal Input</b>		Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree	
1.	I communicate well with my peers	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I am easy to talk to	1	2	3	4	5
3.	I communicate effectively with those around me	1	2	3	4	5
4.	It is important to have an open management style where others can speak freely	1	2	3	4	5
5.	I expect to be kept informed of progress on agreed initiatives	1	2	3	4	5

<b>Customer Focus</b>		Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree	
1.	We provide services to fit the needs of the customers	1	2	3	4	5
2.	We exceed customer expectations	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Everyone in this authority knows how they themselves add value	1	2	3	4	5
4.	We are responsive to changing authority priorities	1	2	3	4	5
5.	The customer is King	1	2	3	4	5

<b>Attention to Customer Care</b> (scale reversed)		Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree	
1.	Time is spent on management related issues at the expense of customer care	1	2	3	4	5
2.	The way this authority operates diverts attention away from customer care	1	2	3	4	5
3.	In this authority not enough thought is given to customer care	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Current budgeting practices adversely affect customer care	1	2	3	4	5
5.	The internal politics within the authority have an adverse affect on the quality of service provided to customers	1	2	3	4	5

<b>Independence</b>		Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree	
1.	Being my own boss is what really appeals to me	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I like to be left alone to do my work as I see fit	1	2	3	4	5
3.	I like being in a position where others do not have control over me	1	2	3	4	5
4.	I resent being told what to do	1	2	3	4	5

<b>Discipline</b>		Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree	
1.	We need a structured and disciplined way of managing the authority	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I am disciplined at follow-through	1	2	3	4	5
3.	A well run, disciplined authority is fundamental to success	1	2	3	4	5
4.	It is important to follow established work procedures	1	2	3	4	5
5.	I like people to pay attention to details	1	2	3	4	5
6.	I like people to be tidy and well disciplined	1	2	3	4	5
7.	I respect people who stick to the rules	1	2	3	4	5
8.	The Cabinet Team need to be more disciplined at follow through (scale reversed)	1	2	3	4	5
9.	Money is wasted in this authority because we do not have proper controls in place (scale reversed)	1	2	3	4	5

<b>Job Satisfaction</b>		Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree	
1.	Most people at my level are satisfied with the job	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Generally, I am very satisfied with my job	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Morale within the authority is high	1	2	3	4	5
4.	I am motivated to carry out my job	1	2	3	4	5
5.	I enjoy the challenge of my role in the company	1	2	3	4	5
6.	The job is intellectually challenging	1	2	3	4	5

<b>Authority Culture</b>		Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree	
1.	I feel a part of this authority	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I identify with the authority and what it stands for	1	2	3	4	5
3.	I am committed to this authority	1	2	3	4	5
4.	I am committed to my colleagues in this authority	1	2	3	4	5
5.	The quality of staff in this authority is excellent	1	2	3	4	5
6.	The sort of people we have in the authority are dedicated to its success	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Staff development here is taken seriously	1	2	3	4	5
8.	There is a friendly atmosphere within the authority	1	2	3	4	5
9.	It is people who make the authority 'tick'	1	2	3	4	5
10.	The authority's culture (policies, people, working conditions) encourages me to work hard	1	2	3	4	5

<b>Issues relating To Role – Questions for Members &amp; Officers</b>		Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree	
1.	We spend time on formal (bureaucratic) Council Processes	1	2	3	4	5
2.	We spend time on civic engagement activities	1	2	3	4	5
3.	My role involves dealing with operational issues	1	2	3	4	5
4.	My role involves dealing with strategic issues	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Work- life balance is an issue for me	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Members take sole responsibility when things go wrong	1	2	3	4	5

<b>Issues relating To Role – Questions for Members</b>		Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree	
1.	Salary is a barrier to greater engagement in my Council Roles	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Electoral Timescales create a short term imperative for delivery of objectives	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Political will and determination is a critical factor in achieving delivery	1	2	3	4	5

<b>The Political Group – Questions for Members &amp; Officers</b>		Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree	
1.	I have an understanding of the role of the Political Group in relation to the Council	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I have an understanding of Political Group processes	1	2	3	4	5
3.	I understand the roles of different members in the Political Group	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Issues come to the Political Group which have already been decided	1	2	3	4	5
5.	I feel the Political Group has a clear vision	1	2	3	4	5
6.	The vision of the Political Group relates to the manifesto	1	2	3	4	5
7.	The Political Groups are the real focus of policy making in the authority	1	2	3	4	5
8.	I am able to influence decision making in the Political Group	1	2	3	4	5
9.	Everyone is aware of the ‘big picture’	1	2	3	4	5

<b>The Political group – Questions for Members</b>		Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree	
1.	I feel able to openly contribute to Political Group discussions	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Some members of the Political Group have far more influence than me	1	2	3	4	5

<b>The Cabinet Team – Decision Making</b>		Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree	
1.	I use my heart as much as my head when deciding what to do next	1	2	3	4	5
2.	The quality of decision making at Cabinet Team is high	1	2	3	4	5
3.	I like to get my own way	1	2	3	4	5
4.	I support most of the decisions made by the Cabinet Team	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Decisions are made behind closed doors	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Decisions here seem to be changed from one day to the next	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Checking out my plans with others slows me down rather than adds anything of value	1	2	3	4	5
8.	I dislike others trying to alter my views	1	2	3	4	5
9.	There is a right and a wrong way of doing things	1	2	3	4	5

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION**



## 9.6 Appendix 6 – Frequency Analysis

### Frequency Analysis

#### Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	127	83.0	83.0	83.0
	Female	26	17.0	17.0	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

#### Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	30 to 39	8	5.2	5.3	5.3
	40 to 49	49	32.0	32.2	37.5
	50 to 59	69	45.1	45.4	82.9
	60 or over	26	17.0	17.1	100.0
	Total	152	99.3	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.7		
Total		153	100.0		

#### Seniority

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Leader	67	43.8	43.8	43.8
	Chief Executive	86	56.2	56.2	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

#### Years in this authority/Years in current job

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 1	19	12.4	12.4	12.4
	1 to 2	32	20.9	20.9	33.3
	3 to 5	44	28.8	28.8	62.1
	6 to 10	34	22.2	22.2	84.3
	11 to 20	16	10.5	10.5	94.8
	21 and over	8	5.2	5.2	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**Are you a member of the Cabinet (or other) Team**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	107	69.9	73.8	73.8
	No	38	24.8	26.2	100.0
	Total	145	94.8	100.0	
Missing	System	8	5.2		
Total		153	100.0		

**Authority Classification**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Borough	93	60.8	60.8	60.8
	County	20	13.1	13.1	73.9
	Unitary / County Borough	26	17.0	17.0	90.8
	City	14	9.2	9.2	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**Political Context of Cabinet (or other) team**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Single Party Control	118	77.1	77.1	77.1
	Hung Council	21	13.7	13.7	90.8
	Multi-Party Cabinet	11	7.2	7.2	98.0
	Other	3	2.0	2.0	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**Number of employees**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Under 500	54	35.3	35.5	35.5
	500 to 2,499	38	24.8	25.0	60.5
	2,500 to 4,999	14	9.2	9.2	69.7
	5,000 to 9,999	14	9.2	9.2	78.9
	10,000 to 14,999	13	8.5	8.6	87.5
	15,000 or over	19	12.4	12.5	100.0
	Total	152	99.3	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.7		
Total		153	100.0		

**The Cabinet Team are performing effectively**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	1	.7	.7	.7
	Disagree	1	.7	.7	1.3
	Neither agree nor disagree	10	6.5	6.5	7.8
	Agree	87	56.9	56.9	64.7
	Strongly agree	54	35.3	35.3	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**I am committed to the leadership of this authority**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	2	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Disagree	1	.7	.7	2.0
	Neither agree nor disagree	2	1.3	1.3	3.3
	Agree	16	10.5	10.5	13.7
	Strongly agree	132	86.3	86.3	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**Successful policy implementation depends upon my ability to handle members of the Cabinet Team**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	3	2.0	2.0	2.0
	Disagree	4	2.6	2.6	4.6
	Neither agree nor disagree	23	15.0	15.0	19.6
	Agree	62	40.5	40.5	60.1
	Strongly agree	61	39.9	39.9	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**The needs of the customer are well understood by those in the Cabinet Team**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	1	.7	.7	.7
	Disagree	7	4.6	4.6	5.2
	Neither agree nor disagree	10	6.5	6.5	11.8
	Agree	74	48.4	48.4	60.1
	Strongly agree	61	39.9	39.9	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**Those at the top are too distant from what happens on a daily basis**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	49	32.0	32.0	32.0
	Disagree	84	54.9	54.9	86.9
	Neither agree nor disagree	17	11.1	11.1	98.0
	Agree	3	2.0	2.0	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**The Cabinet Team have little impact on the running of the authority**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	86	56.2	56.2	56.2
	Disagree	59	38.6	38.6	94.8
	Neither agree nor disagree	6	3.9	3.9	98.7
	Agree	2	1.3	1.3	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**The Chief Executive seems distant to me**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	111	72.5	72.5	72.5
	Disagree	24	15.7	15.7	88.2
	Neither agree nor disagree	15	9.8	9.8	98.0
	Agree	1	.7	.7	98.7
	Strongly agree	2	1.3	1.3	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**The Cabinet Members have no effective impact on the management of this authority**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	89	58.2	58.2	58.2
	Disagree	58	37.9	37.9	96.1
	Neither agree nor disagree	2	1.3	1.3	97.4
	Agree	4	2.6	2.6	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**The Cabinet Officers seem distant to me**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	91	59.5	59.5	59.5
	Disagree	49	32.0	32.0	91.5
	Neither agree nor disagree	13	8.5	8.5	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**The Cabinet Team in this authority could be more tolerant of one another**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	51	33.3	33.3	33.3
	Disagree	65	42.5	42.5	75.8
	Neither agree nor disagree	16	10.5	10.5	86.3
	Agree	20	13.1	13.1	99.3
	Strongly agree	1	.7	.7	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**Can usually identify what needs to change in the authority in order for it to operate more effectively**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	2	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Disagree	7	4.6	4.6	5.9
	Neither agree nor disagree	12	7.8	7.8	13.7
	Agree	100	65.4	65.4	79.1
	Strongly agree	32	20.9	20.9	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**Are able to grasp a new subject or issue quickly**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	6	3.9	3.9	3.9
	Neither agree nor disagree	10	6.5	6.5	10.5
	Agree	106	69.3	69.3	79.7
	Strongly agree	31	20.3	20.3	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**Grasp an issue, and use it quickly to best effect**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	9	5.9	5.9	5.9
	Neither agree nor disagree	25	16.3	16.3	22.2
	Agree	98	64.1	64.1	86.3
	Strongly agree	21	13.7	13.7	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**Are willing to change the way we do things if it is to the benefit of the authority**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Neither agree nor disagree	5	3.3	3.3	3.3
	Agree	97	63.4	63.4	66.7
	Strongly agree	51	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**Have a clear strategic direction**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	7	4.6	4.6	4.6
	Neither agree nor disagree	6	3.9	3.9	8.5
	Agree	88	57.5	57.5	66.0
	Strongly agree	52	34.0	34.0	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**Have an overall knowledge of the authority**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	2	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Neither agree nor disagree	5	3.3	3.3	4.6
	Agree	63	41.2	41.2	45.8
	Strongly agree	83	54.2	54.2	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**Know how each part of the authority works**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	10	6.5	6.5	6.5
	Neither agree nor disagree	11	7.2	7.2	13.7
	Agree	90	58.8	58.8	72.5
	Strongly agree	42	27.5	27.5	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**Have goals that are clear cut and reasonable**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	2	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Disagree	3	2.0	2.0	3.3
	Neither agree nor disagree	12	7.8	7.8	11.1
	Agree	89	58.2	58.2	69.3
	Strongly agree	47	30.7	30.7	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**Can see the light at the end of the tunnel in respect of current changes**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	3	2.0	2.0	2.0
	Disagree	6	3.9	3.9	5.9
	Neither agree nor disagree	26	17.0	17.0	22.9
	Agree	79	51.6	51.6	74.5
	Strongly agree	39	25.5	25.5	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**Are easy to talk to**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Neither agree nor disagree	1	.7	.7	.7
	Agree	87	56.9	56.9	57.5
	Strongly agree	65	42.5	42.5	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**Openly discuss sensitive issues**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	1	.7	.7	.7
	Disagree	9	5.9	5.9	6.5
	Neither agree nor disagree	13	8.5	8.5	15.0
	Agree	72	47.1	47.1	62.1
	Strongly agree	58	37.9	37.9	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**Have a good understanding of each other**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	8	5.2	5.2	5.2
	Neither agree nor disagree	12	7.8	7.8	13.1
	Agree	85	55.6	55.6	68.6
	Strongly agree	48	31.4	31.4	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**Trust each other**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	14	9.2	9.2	9.2
	Neither agree nor disagree	25	16.3	16.3	25.5
	Agree	83	54.2	54.2	79.7
	Strongly agree	31	20.3	20.3	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**Will consistently implement decisions made**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	1	.7	.7	.7
	Disagree	8	5.2	5.2	5.9
	Neither agree nor disagree	14	9.2	9.2	15.0
	Agree	87	56.9	56.9	71.9
	Strongly agree	43	28.1	28.1	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	



**Will address long and short-term issues**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	2	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Neither agree nor disagree	12	7.8	7.8	9.2
	Agree	87	56.9	56.9	66.0
	Strongly agree	52	34.0	34.0	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**Members and Officers spend time together productively for the authority**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	1	.7	.7	.7
	Disagree	3	2.0	2.0	2.6
	Neither agree nor disagree	4	2.6	2.6	5.2
	Agree	88	57.5	57.5	62.7
	Strongly agree	57	37.3	37.3	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**Identify more with personal objectives than those of the authority**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	16	10.5	10.5	10.5
	Disagree	97	63.4	63.8	74.3
	Neither agree nor disagree	26	17.0	17.1	91.4
	Agree	13	8.5	8.6	100.0
	Total	152	99.3	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.7		
Total		153	100.0		

**Have experienced that maintaining Cabinet Team cohesion demands constant encouragement of my colleagues to work as a team**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	8	5.2	5.2	5.2
	Disagree	21	13.7	13.7	19.0
	Neither agree nor disagree	37	24.2	24.2	43.1
	Agree	63	41.2	41.2	84.3
	Strongly agree	24	15.7	15.7	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**My colleagues and I get on well as a team**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Neither agree nor disagree	2	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Agree	88	57.5	57.5	58.8
	Strongly agree	63	41.2	41.2	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**I get on well with people from different functions / specialisms**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	79	51.6	51.6	51.6
	Strongly agree	74	48.4	48.4	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**A good team spirit exists within the authority**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Neither agree nor disagree	7	4.6	4.6	4.6
	Agree	76	49.7	49.7	54.2
	Strongly agree	70	45.8	45.8	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**The Cabinet Team are pulling in the same direction**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	5	3.3	3.3	3.3
	Neither agree nor disagree	12	7.8	7.8	11.1
	Agree	76	49.7	49.7	60.8
	Strongly agree	60	39.2	39.2	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**The long-term objectives of the authority are clear within the Cabinet Team**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	5	3.3	3.3	3.3
	Neither agree nor disagree	9	5.9	5.9	9.2
	Agree	81	52.9	52.9	62.1
	Strongly agree	58	37.9	37.9	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**The various members of the Cabinet Team hold different views as to the future direction of the authority**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	18	11.8	11.8	11.8
	Disagree	73	47.7	47.7	59.5
	Neither agree nor disagree	32	20.9	20.9	80.4
	Agree	26	17.0	17.0	97.4
	Strongly agree	4	2.6	2.6	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**The Cabinet Team seem to pull in different directions, irrespective of what is 4d**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	66	43.1	43.1	43.1
	Disagree	73	47.7	47.7	90.8
	Neither agree nor disagree	2	1.3	1.3	92.2
	Agree	8	5.2	5.2	97.4
	Strongly agree	4	2.6	2.6	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**There are certain issues or sensitivities that merit, but do not receive attention within the Cabinet Team**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	23	15.0	15.0	15.0
	Disagree	77	50.3	50.3	65.4
	Neither agree nor disagree	21	13.7	13.7	79.1
	Agree	27	17.6	17.6	96.7
	Strongly agree	5	3.3	3.3	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**We have the freedom to perform in our role**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	2	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Disagree	8	5.2	5.2	6.5
	Neither agree nor disagree	2	1.3	1.3	7.8
	Agree	97	63.4	63.4	71.2
	Strongly agree	44	28.8	28.8	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**Staff have the freedom to influence many changes**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	1	.7	.7	.7
	Neither agree nor disagree	19	12.4	12.4	13.1
	Agree	101	66.0	66.0	79.1
	Strongly agree	32	20.9	20.9	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**There is scope for individual initiative with few constraints**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	6	3.9	3.9	3.9
	Neither agree nor disagree	27	17.6	17.6	21.6
	Agree	93	60.8	60.8	82.4
	Strongly agree	27	17.6	17.6	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**The quality of communication is good at Cabinet Team level**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	5	3.3	3.3	3.3
	Neither agree nor disagree	25	16.3	16.4	19.7
	Agree	98	64.1	64.5	84.2
	Strongly agree	24	15.7	15.8	100.0
	Total	152	99.3	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.7		
Total		153	100.0		

**Communication across departments is good**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	1	.7	.7	.7
	Neither agree nor disagree	43	28.1	28.1	28.8
	Agree	89	58.2	58.2	86.9
	Strongly agree	20	13.1	13.1	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**Members of the Cabinet Team are good listeners**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	6	3.9	3.9	3.9
	Neither agree nor disagree	32	20.9	20.9	24.8
	Agree	113	73.9	73.9	98.7
	Strongly agree	2	1.3	1.3	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**I am regularly informed about how new developments and initiatives are progressing**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	5	3.3	3.3	3.3
	Neither agree nor disagree	11	7.2	7.2	10.5
	Agree	100	65.4	65.4	75.8
	Strongly agree	37	24.2	24.2	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**Communication within departments is good**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	5	3.3	3.3	3.3
	Neither agree nor disagree	40	26.1	26.1	29.4
	Agree	86	56.2	56.2	85.6
	Strongly agree	22	14.4	14.4	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**am only informed of new developments on a 'need to know' basis (scale reversed)**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	29	19.0	19.0	19.0
	Disagree	82	53.6	53.6	72.5
	Neither agree nor disagree	23	15.0	15.0	87.6
	Agree	19	12.4	12.4	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**People should manage their own problems without having to talk them through with others**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	37	24.2	24.2	24.2
	Disagree	102	66.7	66.7	90.8
	Neither agree nor disagree	10	6.5	6.5	97.4
	Agree	4	2.6	2.6	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**I have all the information I need to participate in policy and decision making**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	4	2.6	2.6	2.6
	Neither agree nor disagree	21	13.7	13.7	16.3
	Agree	89	58.2	58.2	74.5
	Strongly agree	39	25.5	25.5	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**I communicate well with my peers**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	2	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Neither agree nor disagree	3	2.0	2.0	3.3
	Agree	98	64.1	64.1	67.3
	Strongly agree	50	32.7	32.7	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**I am easy to talk to**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	4	2.6	2.6	2.6
	Neither agree nor disagree	6	3.9	3.9	6.5
	Agree	92	60.1	60.1	66.7
	Strongly agree	51	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**I communicate effectively with those around me**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	2	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Neither agree nor disagree	5	3.3	3.3	4.6
	Agree	104	68.0	68.0	72.5
	Strongly agree	42	27.5	27.5	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**t is important to have an open management style where others can speak freely**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Neither agree nor disagree	4	2.6	2.6	2.6
	Agree	59	38.6	38.6	41.2
	Strongly agree	90	58.8	58.8	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**I expect to be kept informed of progress on 4d initiatives**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	2	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Agree	65	42.5	42.5	43.8
	Strongly agree	86	56.2	56.2	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**We provide services to fit the needs of the customers**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	2	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Neither agree nor disagree	15	9.8	9.8	11.1
	Agree	81	52.9	52.9	64.1
	Strongly agree	55	35.9	35.9	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**We exceed customer expectations**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	29	19.0	19.0	19.0
	Neither agree nor disagree	57	37.3	37.3	56.2
	Agree	45	29.4	29.4	85.6
	Strongly agree	22	14.4	14.4	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**Everyone in this authority knows how they themselves add value**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	16	10.5	10.5	10.5
	Neither agree nor disagree	55	35.9	35.9	46.4
	Agree	66	43.1	43.1	89.5
	Strongly agree	16	10.5	10.5	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**We are responsive to changing authority priorities**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Neither agree nor disagree	14	9.2	9.2	9.2
	Agree	103	67.3	67.8	77.0
	Strongly agree	35	22.9	23.0	100.0
	Total	152	99.3	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.7		
Total		153	100.0		

**The customer is King**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	7	4.6	4.6	4.6
	Neither agree nor disagree	34	22.2	22.2	26.8
	Agree	72	47.1	47.1	73.9
	Strongly agree	40	26.1	26.1	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	



**Time is spent on management related issues at the expense of customer care**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	13	8.5	8.5	8.5
	Disagree	79	51.6	51.6	60.1
	Neither agree nor disagree	39	25.5	25.5	85.6
	Agree	22	14.4	14.4	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**The way this authority operates diverts attention away from customer care**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	35	22.9	22.9	22.9
	Disagree	99	64.7	64.7	87.6
	Neither agree nor disagree	15	9.8	9.8	97.4
	Agree	4	2.6	2.6	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**In this authority not enough thought is given to customer care**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	48	31.4	31.6	31.6
	Disagree	62	40.5	40.8	72.4
	Neither agree nor disagree	19	12.4	12.5	84.9
	Agree	22	14.4	14.5	99.3
	Strongly agree	1	.7	.7	100.0
	Total	152	99.3	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.7		
Total		153	100.0		

**Current budgeting practices adversely affect customer care**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	40	26.1	26.1	26.1
	Disagree	71	46.4	46.4	72.5
	Neither agree nor disagree	31	20.3	20.3	92.8
	Agree	10	6.5	6.5	99.3
	Strongly agree	1	.7	.7	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**The internal politics within the authority have an adverse affect on the quality of service provided to customers**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	61	39.9	39.9	39.9
	Disagree	63	41.2	41.2	81.0
	Neither agree nor disagree	16	10.5	10.5	91.5
	Agree	12	7.8	7.8	99.3
	Strongly agree	1	.7	.7	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**Being my own boss is what really appeals to me**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	2	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Disagree	39	25.5	25.5	26.8
	Neither agree nor disagree	50	32.7	32.7	59.5
	Agree	42	27.5	27.5	86.9
	Strongly agree	20	13.1	13.1	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**I like to be left alone to do my work as I see fit**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	12	7.8	7.8	7.8
	Disagree	70	45.8	45.8	53.6
	Neither agree nor disagree	42	27.5	27.5	81.0
	Agree	23	15.0	15.0	96.1
	Strongly agree	6	3.9	3.9	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**I like being in a position where others do not have control over me**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	9	5.9	5.9	5.9
	Disagree	44	28.8	28.8	34.6
	Neither agree nor disagree	47	30.7	30.7	65.4
	Agree	37	24.2	24.2	89.5
	Strongly agree	16	10.5	10.5	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**I resent being told what to do**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	23	15.0	15.0	15.0
	Disagree	62	40.5	40.5	55.6
	Neither agree nor disagree	43	28.1	28.1	83.7
	Agree	16	10.5	10.5	94.1
	Strongly agree	9	5.9	5.9	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**We need a structured and disciplined way of managing the authority**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	4	2.6	2.6	2.6
	Neither agree nor disagree	19	12.4	12.4	15.0
	Agree	102	66.7	66.7	81.7
	Strongly agree	28	18.3	18.3	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**I am disciplined at follow-through**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	1	.7	.7	.7
	Disagree	8	5.2	5.2	5.9
	Neither agree nor disagree	29	19.0	19.0	24.8
	Agree	101	66.0	66.0	90.8
	Strongly agree	14	9.2	9.2	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**A well run, disciplined authority is fundamental to success**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	6	3.9	3.9	3.9
	Neither agree nor disagree	16	10.5	10.5	14.4
	Agree	96	62.7	62.7	77.1
	Strongly agree	35	22.9	22.9	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**It is important to follow established work procedures**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	13	8.5	8.5	8.5
	Neither agree nor disagree	63	41.2	41.2	49.7
	Agree	71	46.4	46.4	96.1
	Strongly agree	6	3.9	3.9	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**I like people to pay attention to details**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	4	2.6	2.6	2.6
	Neither agree nor disagree	44	28.8	28.8	31.4
	Agree	88	57.5	57.5	88.9
	Strongly agree	17	11.1	11.1	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**I like people to be tidy and well disciplined**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	13	8.5	8.5	8.5
	Neither agree nor disagree	57	37.3	37.3	45.8
	Agree	73	47.7	47.7	93.5
	Strongly agree	10	6.5	6.5	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**I respect people who stick to the rules**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	35	22.9	22.9	22.9
	Neither agree nor disagree	77	50.3	50.3	73.2
	Agree	41	26.8	26.8	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**The Cabinet Team need to be more disciplined at follow through (scale reversed)**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	17	11.1	11.1	11.1
	Disagree	63	41.2	41.2	52.3
	Neither agree nor disagree	40	26.1	26.1	78.4
	Agree	33	21.6	21.6	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**Money is wasted in this authority because we do not have proper controls in place (scale reversed)**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	44	28.8	28.8	28.8
	Disagree	84	54.9	54.9	83.7
	Neither agree nor disagree	18	11.8	11.8	95.4
	Agree	7	4.6	4.6	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**Most people at my level are satisfied with the job**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	1	.7	.7	.7
	Neither agree nor disagree	24	15.7	15.7	16.3
	Agree	92	60.1	60.1	76.5
	Strongly agree	36	23.5	23.5	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**Generally, I am very satisfied with my job**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	1	.7	.7	.7
	Neither agree nor disagree	7	4.6	4.6	5.2
	Agree	71	46.4	46.4	51.6
	Strongly agree	74	48.4	48.4	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**Morale within the authority is high**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	8	5.2	5.2	5.2
	Neither agree nor disagree	35	22.9	22.9	28.1
	Agree	74	48.4	48.4	76.5
	Strongly agree	36	23.5	23.5	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**I am motivated to carry out my job**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Neither agree nor disagree	7	4.6	4.6	4.6
	Agree	59	38.6	38.6	43.1
	Strongly agree	87	56.9	56.9	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**I enjoy the challenge of my role in the company**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	2	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Neither agree nor disagree	3	2.0	2.0	3.3
	Agree	55	35.9	35.9	39.2
	Strongly agree	93	60.8	60.8	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**The job is intellectually challenging**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	2	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Disagree	2	1.3	1.3	2.6
	Neither agree nor disagree	8	5.2	5.3	7.9
	Agree	51	33.3	33.6	41.4
	Strongly agree	89	58.2	58.6	100.0
	Total	152	99.3	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.7		
Total		153	100.0		

**I feel a part of this authority**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Neither agree nor disagree	2	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Agree	51	33.3	33.3	34.6
	Strongly agree	100	65.4	65.4	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**I identify with the authority and what it stands for**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Neither agree nor disagree	2	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Agree	52	34.0	34.0	35.3
	Strongly agree	99	64.7	64.7	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**I am committed to this authority**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	36	23.5	23.5	23.5
	Strongly agree	117	76.5	76.5	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**I am committed to my colleagues in this authority**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	52	34.0	34.0	34.0
	Strongly agree	101	66.0	66.0	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**The quality of staff in this authority is excellent**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Neither agree nor disagree	13	8.5	8.5	8.5
	Agree	67	43.8	43.8	52.3
	Strongly agree	73	47.7	47.7	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**The sort of people we have in the authority are dedicated to its success**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Neither agree nor disagree	11	7.2	7.2	7.2
	Agree	73	47.7	47.7	54.9
	Strongly agree	69	45.1	45.1	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**Staff development here is taken seriously**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	1	.7	.7	.7
	Neither agree nor disagree	13	8.5	8.5	9.2
	Agree	75	49.0	49.0	58.2
	Strongly agree	64	41.8	41.8	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**There is a friendly atmosphere within the authority**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	4	2.6	2.6	2.6
	Neither agree nor disagree	2	1.3	1.3	3.9
	Agree	68	44.4	44.4	48.4
	Strongly agree	79	51.6	51.6	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**It is people who make the authority 'tick'**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	4	2.6	2.6	2.6
	Agree	45	29.4	29.4	32.0
	Strongly agree	104	68.0	68.0	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	



**The authority's culture (policies, people, working conditions) encourages me to work hard**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	2	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Disagree	3	2.0	2.0	3.3
	Neither agree nor disagree	12	7.8	7.8	11.1
	Agree	70	45.8	45.8	56.9
	Strongly agree	66	43.1	43.1	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**We spend time on formal (bureaucratic) Council Processes**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	2	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Disagree	22	14.4	14.5	15.8
	Neither agree nor disagree	26	17.0	17.1	32.9
	Agree	97	63.4	63.8	96.7
	Strongly agree	5	3.3	3.3	100.0
	Total	152	99.3	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.7		
Total		153	100.0		

**We spend time on civic engagement activities**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	1	.7	.7	.7
	Disagree	36	23.5	23.5	24.2
	Neither agree nor disagree	13	8.5	8.5	32.7
	Agree	97	63.4	63.4	96.1
	Strongly agree	6	3.9	3.9	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**My role involves dealing with operational issues**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	7	4.6	4.6	4.6
	Disagree	47	30.7	30.7	35.3
	Neither agree nor disagree	32	20.9	20.9	56.2
	Agree	61	39.9	39.9	96.1
	Strongly agree	6	3.9	3.9	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**Work- life balance is an issue for me**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	5	3.3	3.3	3.3
	Disagree	31	20.3	20.3	23.5
	Neither agree nor disagree	35	22.9	22.9	46.4
	Agree	58	37.9	37.9	84.3
	Strongly agree	24	15.7	15.7	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**Members take sole responsibility when things go wrong**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	22	14.4	14.5	14.5
	Disagree	72	47.1	47.4	61.8
	Neither agree nor disagree	32	20.9	21.1	82.9
	Agree	18	11.8	11.8	94.7
	Strongly agree	8	5.2	5.3	100.0
	Total	152	99.3	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.7		
Total		153	100.0		

**Salary is a barrier to greater engagement in my Council Roles**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	11	7.2	16.4	16.4
	Disagree	21	13.7	31.3	47.8
	Neither agree nor disagree	7	4.6	10.4	58.2
	Agree	15	9.8	22.4	80.6
	Strongly agree	13	8.5	19.4	100.0
	Total	67	43.8	100.0	
Missing	System	86	56.2		
Total		153	100.0		

**Electoral Timescales create a short term imperative for delivery of objectives**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	8	5.2	11.9	11.9
	Disagree	8	5.2	11.9	23.9
	Neither agree nor disagree	5	3.3	7.5	31.3
	Agree	25	16.3	37.3	68.7
	Strongly agree	21	13.7	31.3	100.0
	Total	67	43.8	100.0	
Missing	System	86	56.2		
Total		153	100.0		

**Political will and determination is a critical factor in achieving delivery**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	2	1.3	3.0	3.0
	Agree	14	9.2	20.9	23.9
	Strongly agree	51	33.3	76.1	100.0
	Total	67	43.8	100.0	
Missing	System	86	56.2		
Total		153	100.0		

**I have an understanding of the role of the Political Group in relation to the Council**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Neither agree nor disagree	3	2.0	2.0	2.0
	Agree	42	27.5	27.5	29.4
	Strongly agree	108	70.6	70.6	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**I have an understanding of Political Group processes**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Neither agree nor disagree	6	3.9	3.9	3.9
	Agree	44	28.8	28.8	32.7
	Strongly agree	103	67.3	67.3	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**I understand the roles of different members in the Political Group**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	2	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Neither agree nor disagree	6	3.9	3.9	5.2
	Agree	53	34.6	34.6	39.9
	Strongly agree	92	60.1	60.1	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**Issues come to the Political Group which have already been decided**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	5	3.3	3.3	3.3
	Disagree	54	35.3	35.3	38.6
	Neither agree nor disagree	49	32.0	32.0	70.6
	Agree	32	20.9	20.9	91.5
	Strongly agree	13	8.5	8.5	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**I feel the Political Group has a clear vision**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	2	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Disagree	18	11.8	11.8	13.1
	Neither agree nor disagree	28	18.3	18.3	31.4
	Agree	82	53.6	53.6	85.0
	Strongly agree	23	15.0	15.0	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**The vision of the Political Group relates to the manifesto**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	3	2.0	2.0	2.0
	Disagree	12	7.8	7.8	9.8
	Neither agree nor disagree	36	23.5	23.5	33.3
	Agree	69	45.1	45.1	78.4
	Strongly agree	33	21.6	21.6	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**The Political Groups are the real focus of policy making in the authority**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	7	4.6	4.6	4.6
	Disagree	27	17.6	17.9	22.5
	Neither agree nor disagree	46	30.1	30.5	53.0
	Agree	58	37.9	38.4	91.4
	Strongly agree	13	8.5	8.6	100.0
	Total	151	98.7	100.0	
Missing	System	2	1.3		
Total		153	100.0		

**I am able to influence decision making in the Political Group**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	8	5.2	5.2	5.2
	Neither agree nor disagree	21	13.7	13.7	19.0
	Agree	73	47.7	47.7	66.7
	Strongly agree	51	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**Everyone is aware of the 'big picture'**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	7	4.6	4.6	4.6
	Disagree	17	11.1	11.2	15.8
	Neither agree nor disagree	54	35.3	35.5	51.3
	Agree	57	37.3	37.5	88.8
	Strongly agree	17	11.1	11.2	100.0
	Total	152	99.3	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.7		
Total		153	100.0		

**I feel able to openly contribute to Political Group discussions**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	3	2.0	4.5	4.5
	Agree	13	8.5	19.4	23.9
	Strongly agree	51	33.3	76.1	100.0
	Total	67	43.8	100.0	
Missing	System	86	56.2		
Total		153	100.0		

**Some members of the Political Group have far more influence than me**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	25	16.3	37.3	37.3
	Disagree	24	15.7	35.8	73.1
	Neither agree nor disagree	12	7.8	17.9	91.0
	Agree	6	3.9	9.0	100.0
	Total	67	43.8	100.0	
Missing	System	86	56.2		
Total		153	100.0		

**I use my heart as much as my head when deciding what to do next**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	4	2.6	2.6	2.6
	Disagree	74	48.4	48.4	51.0
	Neither agree nor disagree	41	26.8	26.8	77.8
	Agree	27	17.6	17.6	95.4
	Strongly agree	7	4.6	4.6	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**The quality of decision making at Cabinet Team is high**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	8	5.2	5.2	5.2
	Neither agree nor disagree	17	11.1	11.1	16.3
	Agree	101	66.0	66.0	82.4
	Strongly agree	27	17.6	17.6	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**I like to get my own way**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	3	2.0	2.0	2.0
	Disagree	23	15.0	15.0	17.0
	Neither agree nor disagree	70	45.8	45.8	62.7
	Agree	52	34.0	34.0	96.7
	Strongly agree	5	3.3	3.3	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**I support most of the decisions made by the Cabinet Team**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	1	.7	.7	.7
	Disagree	3	2.0	2.0	2.6
	Neither agree nor disagree	15	9.8	9.9	12.5
	Agree	94	61.4	61.8	74.3
	Strongly agree	39	25.5	25.7	100.0
	Total	152	99.3	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.7		
Total		153	100.0		

**Decisions are made behind closed doors**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	29	19.0	19.0	19.0
	Disagree	86	56.2	56.2	75.2
	Neither agree nor disagree	19	12.4	12.4	87.6
	Agree	15	9.8	9.8	97.4
	Strongly agree	4	2.6	2.6	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**Decisions here seem to be changed from one day to the next**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	63	41.2	41.2	41.2
	Disagree	78	51.0	51.0	92.2
	Neither agree nor disagree	5	3.3	3.3	95.4
	Agree	2	1.3	1.3	96.7
	Strongly agree	5	3.3	3.3	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**Checking out my plans with others slows me down rather than adds anything of value**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	35	22.9	22.9	22.9
	Disagree	99	64.7	64.7	87.6
	Neither agree nor disagree	17	11.1	11.1	98.7
	Agree	1	.7	.7	99.3
	Strongly agree	1	.7	.7	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	

**I dislike others trying to alter my views**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	23	15.0	15.0	15.0
	Disagree	100	65.4	65.4	80.4
	Neither agree nor disagree	25	16.3	16.3	96.7
	Agree	5	3.3	3.3	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	



**There is a right and a wrong way of doing things**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	18	11.8	11.8	11.8
	Disagree	62	40.5	40.5	52.3
	Neither agree nor disagree	38	24.8	24.8	77.1
	Agree	31	20.3	20.3	97.4
	Strongly agree	4	2.6	2.6	100.0
	Total	153	100.0	100.0	